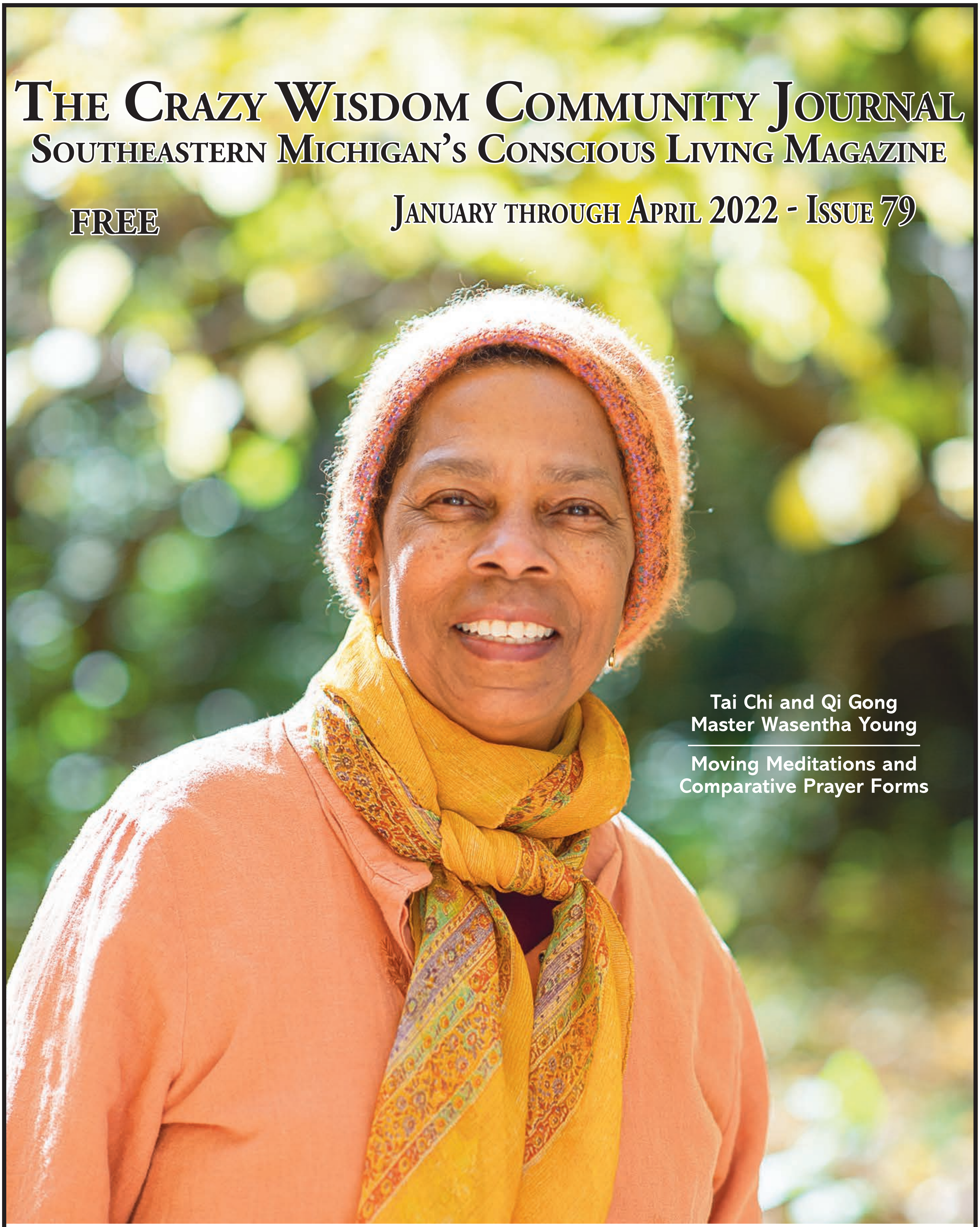
THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL

SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN'S CONSCIOUS LIVING MAGAZINE

FREE

JANUARY THROUGH APRIL 2022 - ISSUE 79



Tai Chi and Qi Gong
Master Wasentha Young

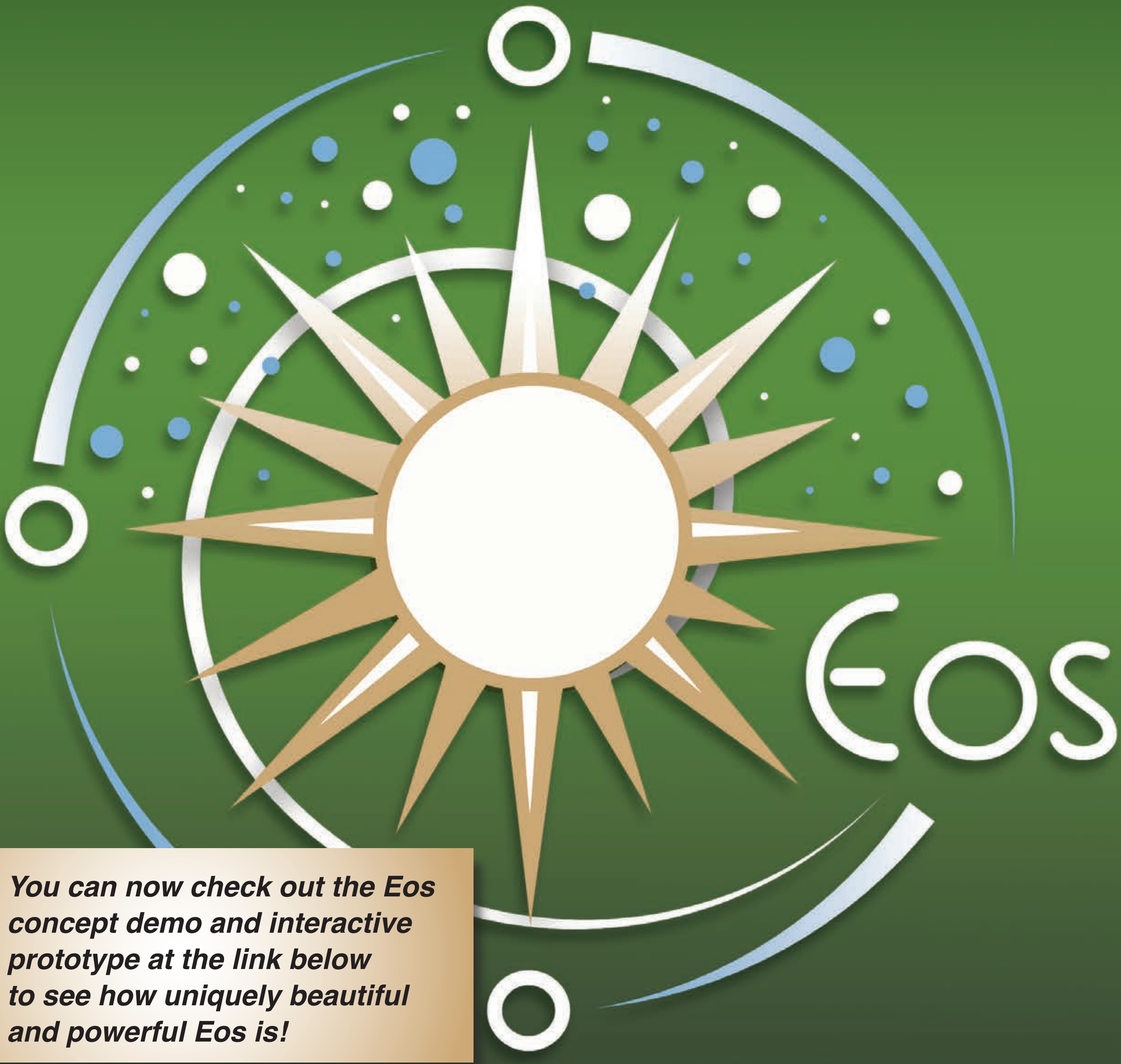
Moving Meditations and
Comparative Prayer Forms

Lou Weir and the Diamond Approach

Trading In Harmful Landscaping Habits for Healthy Sustainability

• Community Farm Update • Full Moon Ceremony • Remembering Linda Diane Feldt • Yoga Column • Rev. Marie Duquette on *What We Can Predict* • Brian O'Donnell on *Faith and Doubt* • Leslie Blackburn • *Dreaming Dangerously* • Supporting Mental Health During Pregnancy • Kids Volunteering • *Mindful Awakenings* • Talking While Walking • Lovely Monkey Tattoo • Celebrating Crazy Wisdom Bookstore • Events Calendar

INTRODUCING



You can now check out the Eos concept demo and interactive prototype at the link below to see how uniquely beautiful and powerful Eos is!

A COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PORTAL

Eos: A New Dawn

SERVING AUTHENTIC
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

By The Intentional Living Collective

Find hope & inspiration, get connected, discover community, and find or offer support & resources.

WWW.EOSPORTAL.ORG

THE INTENTIONAL LIVING Collective
DEEPER CONNECTION

Castle Remedies

Homeopathic Pharmacy

Since 1984, Castle Remedies has been your preferred source for over 1,000 homeopathic remedies, nutritional supplements and herbs of the highest quality, Bach flower essences, as well as distinctive gifts & jewelry.

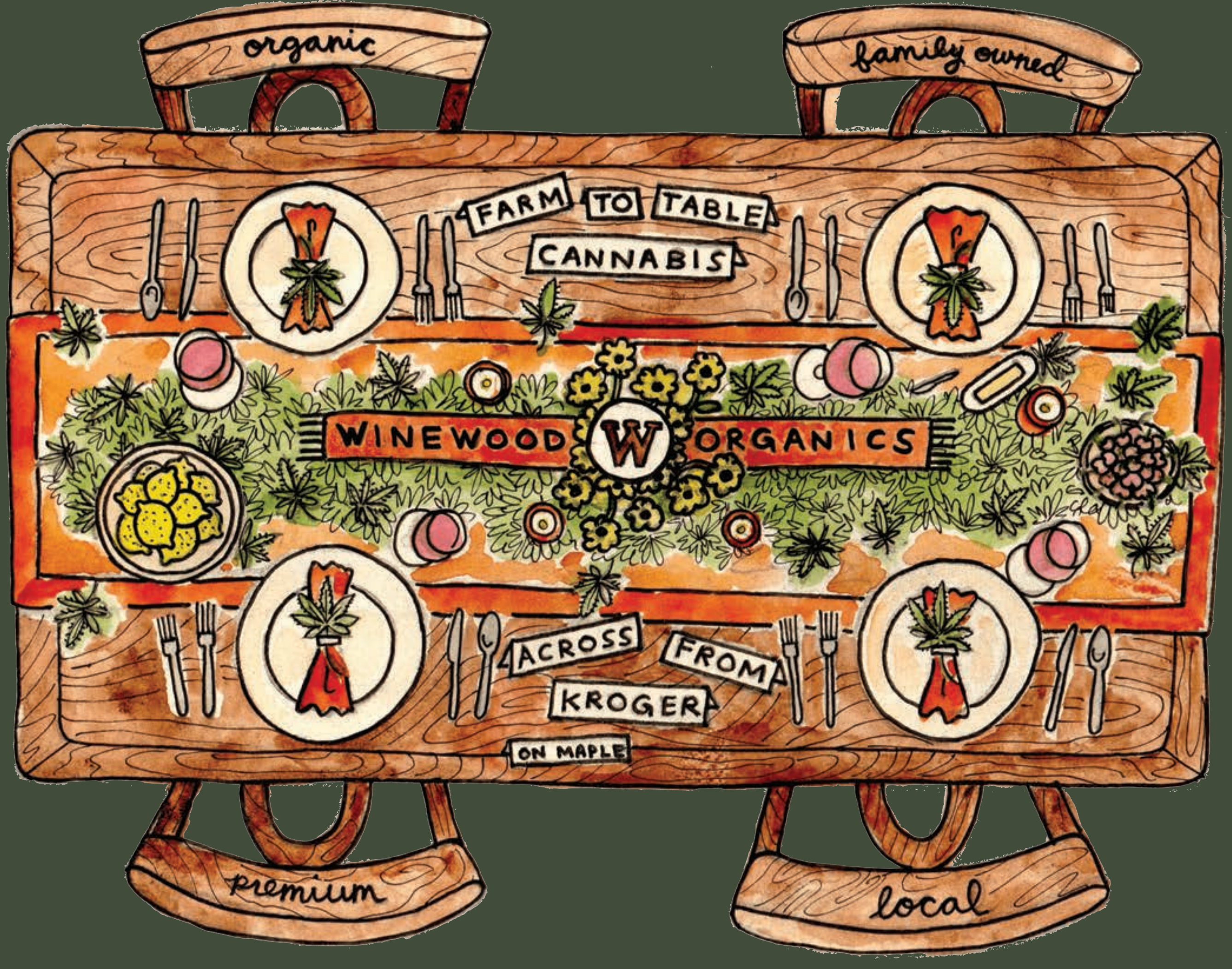
Browse our products online at www.CastleRemedies.com
Shipping and Contactless Curbside Pick Up Available
2345 S. Huron Pkwy, Ann Arbor MI 48104 ● (734) 973-8990

Shop Small, Shop Local! Thank You For Your Support!

CRAZY WISDOM

Congratulations to **Crazy Wisdom** for **40 years** of service.
We are so grateful for the connections, sacred space and spiritual resources that Crazy Wisdom has offered our community.
We are thrilled to hear that the CW Journal will continue to print.

25% Off Your First Purchase of Craft Cannabis



www.winewoodorganics.com

KRASNICK
REGENERATIVE MEDICINE
A CENTER FOR ALTERNATIVE PAIN TREATMENT

If conventional pain treatments haven't worked, regenerative medicine could be a good fit for you. Avoid surgery and steroid injections.

Robert Krasnick, M.D. specializes in:

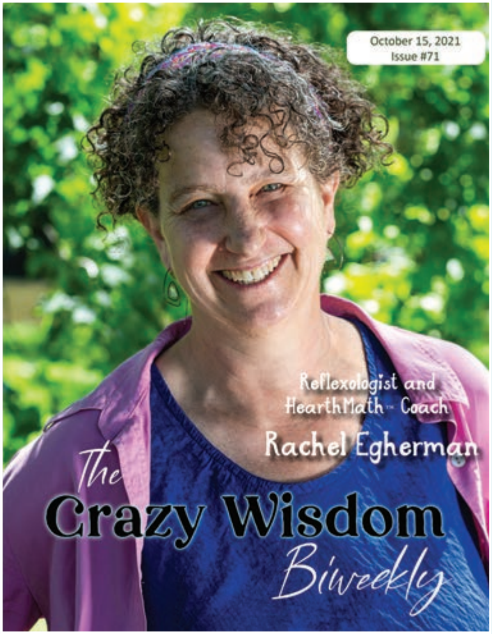
- Prolotherapy
- Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP)
- Bone Marrow concentrate (cellular therapy)
- Prolozone
- IV Therapies including
  - Myers Cocktail
  - Glutathione
  - NAD+
  - Ozone/UBI

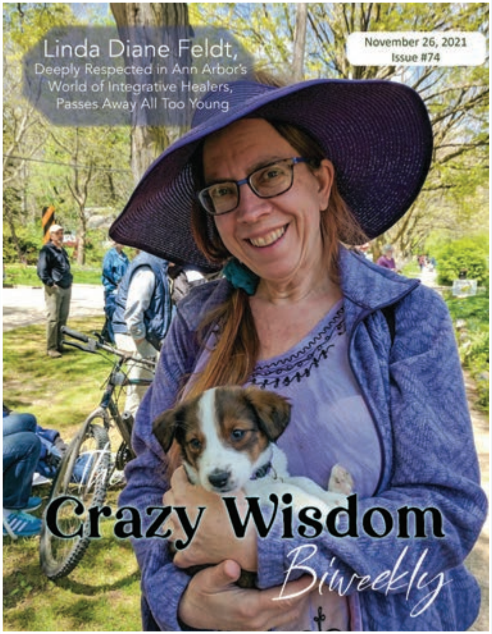
210 Little Lake Drive, Suite 8, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
krasnickregen.com | (734) 585-5653

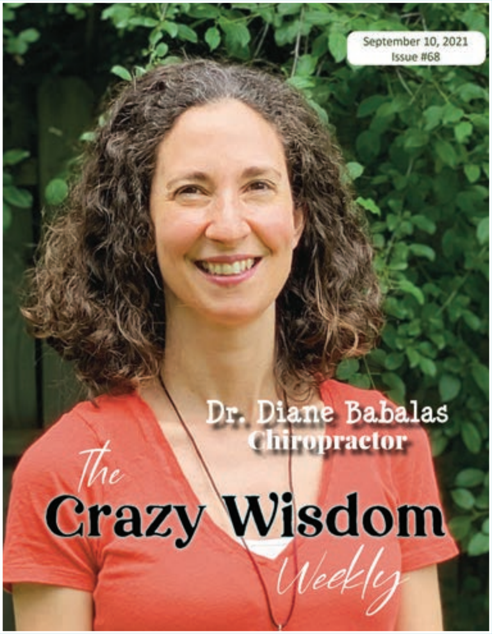
THE CRAZY WISDOM WEEKLY HAS CHANGED TO:

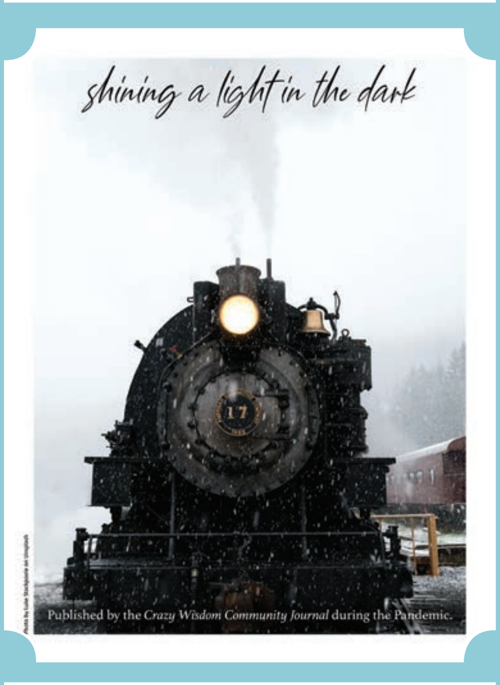
The Crazy Wisdom Biweekly

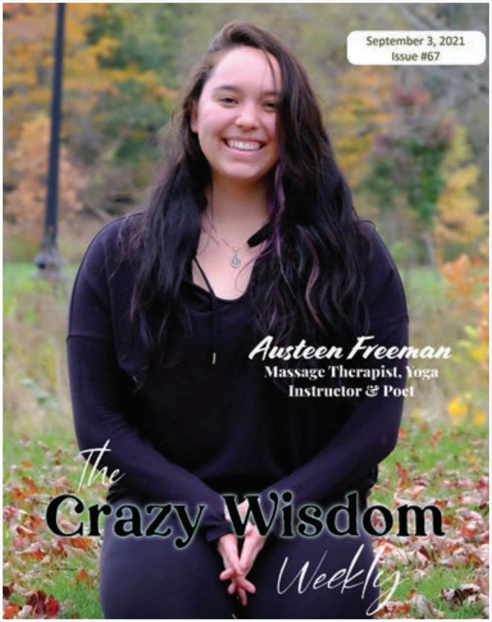
Born during the pandemic, The Crazy Wisdom Biweekly seeks to represent the voices of our community in a timely and entertaining manner. Read the E-zine online by visiting crazywisdomjournal.com/crazy-wisdom-biweekly. If you'd like the E-zine delivered directly to your inbox every Friday morning, click on "Sign Up Now."

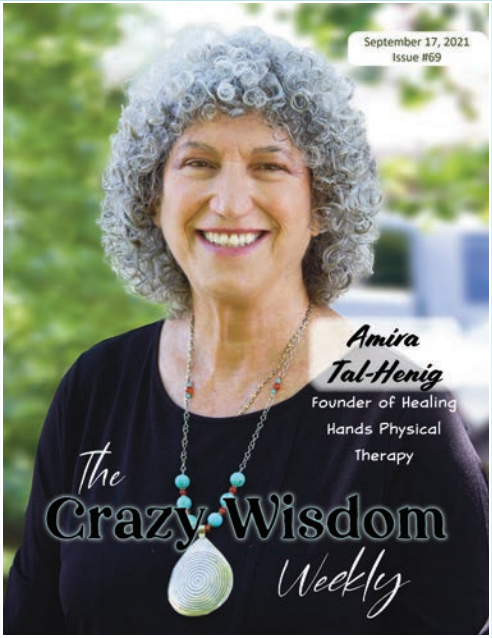


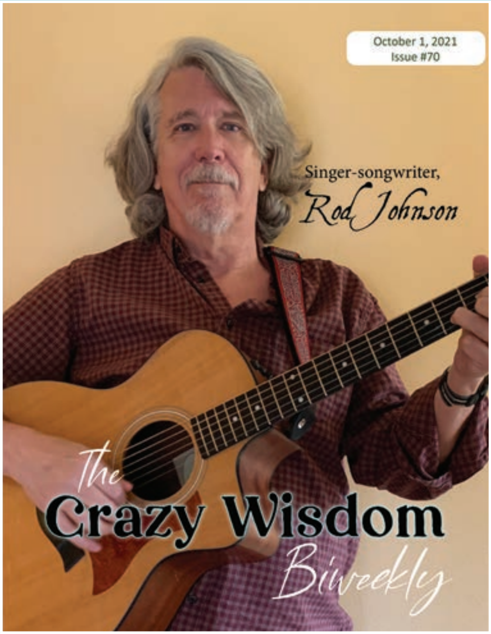

Linda Diane Feldt,
Deeply Respected in Ann Arbor's
World of Integrative Healers,
Passes Away All Too Young
November 26, 2021
Issue #74
The
Crazy Wisdom
Biweekly

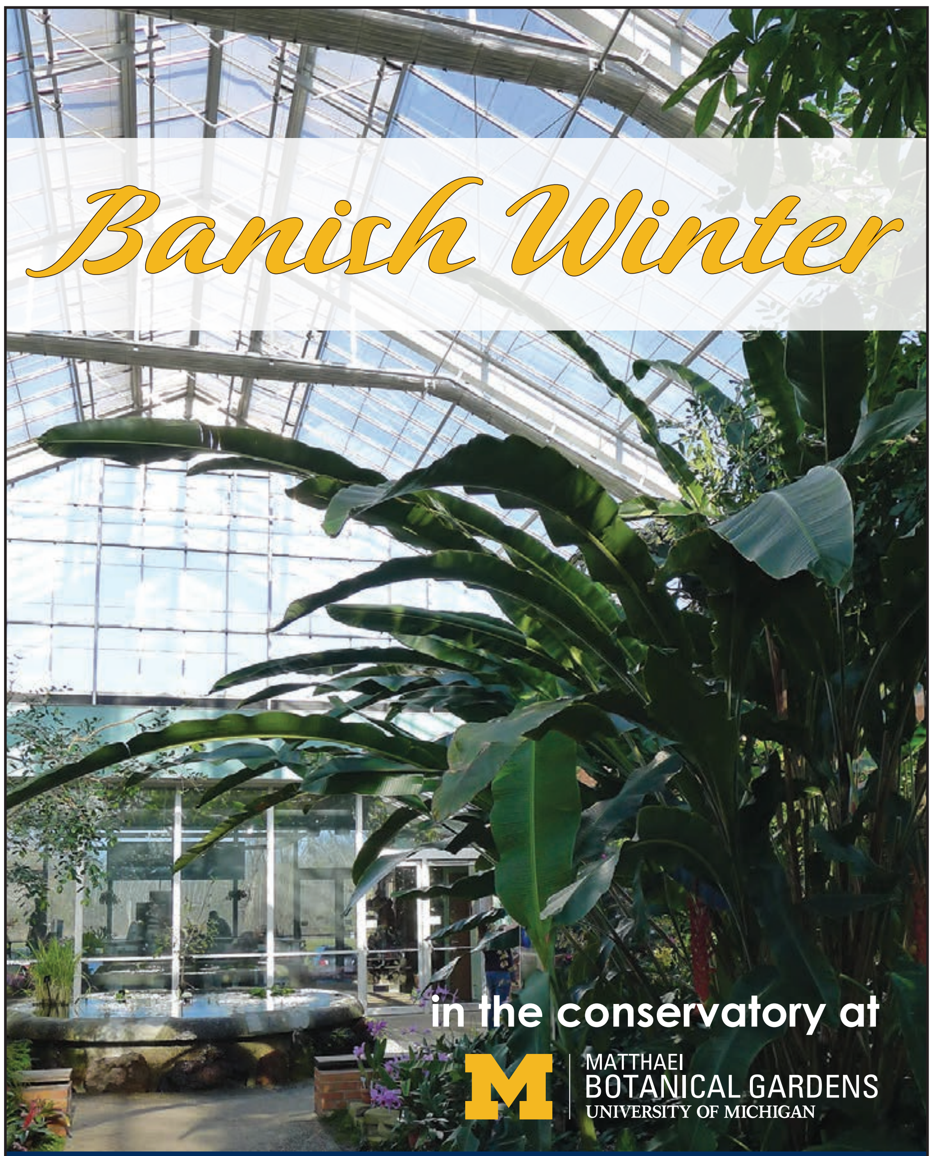



shining a light in the dark
17
Published by the Crazy Wisdom Community Journal during the Pandemic.









Banish Winter

in the conservatory at

MATTHAEI
BOTANICAL GARDENS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Plan your cold weather escape!

Free admission | 1800 N. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor

Visit our website for hours

mbgna.umich.edu 734.647.7600

EBIKES AND CARGO BIKES ARE FOR EVERYONE!

They're green transportation, safe exercise, and accessible recreation.

Experience the Midwest's largest Ebike store!

H.E.H. HUMAN ELECTRIC HYBRIDS LLC

URBAN RIDER CARGO BIKES

410 N. 4th Avenue • HEH; 734-238-2269 • Urban Rider; 734-929-5995

Walk-in Hours: (subject to change; always check the website)
Monday-Saturday 10am-6pm • Sunday 11am-4pm
Appointments are available; schedule through the websites.

Email: HEH; info@human-electric-hybrids.com • Urban Rider; info@urbanrider.bike

www.human-electric-hybrids.com • www.urbanrider.bike

BEMC | BIO ENERGY MEDICAL CENTER

TREATING ILLNESS AT ITS SOURCE

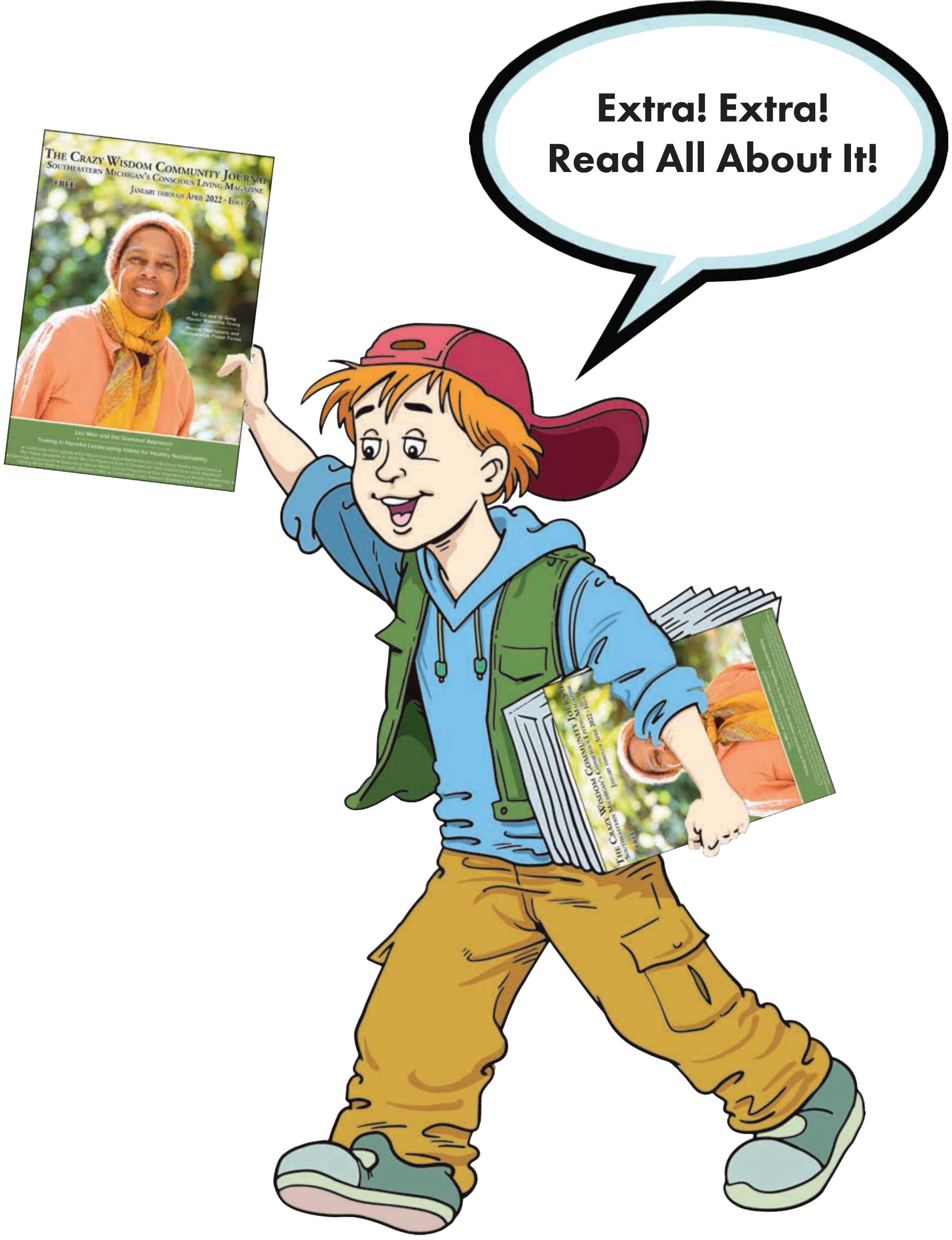
A full service holistic center specializing in Alternative & Complementary Medicine - Located in Ann Arbor for over 30 years

We specialize in: Hormone Imbalances
Allergies, Women's Health, Autism
Infertility, Weight Issues, Toxicity
Lyme Disease, Nutrient Deficiencies
Chronic Fatigue, Autoimmune Conditions
Pain, ADD/ADHD & More

James Neuenschwander, M.D.
Weili Wang, O.M.D (NCCAOM)
Uma Desai, BHMS, CCH, RSHom(NA)
Maria Gahry, DNP, RN, FNP-BC
Jade Russell, MSN, RN, FNP-BC

Homeopathy
Acupuncture
IV Therapy
Specialized Testing
Bio-Identical Hormones
Nutritional Counseling
Weight Loss
Herbal Medicine
Dietary Supplements

www.bioenergymedicalcenter.com **734-995-3200**


Extra! Extra!
Read All About It!
The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal
Southeastern Michigan's Conscious Living Magazine
January through April 2022

Even though the brick-and-mortar Crazy Wisdom Bookstore is closing in February of 2022 (or at the very least, going on sabbatical), we will be expanding *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal*, in print and online, and our online Biweekly Ezine, and maintaining our crazywisdom.net and crazywisdomjournal.com websites, plus shopcrazywisdom.com and AnnArborHolistic.com

Turn page to read more

The formal announcement of the closing of Crazy Wisdom Bookstore was originally posted on our website on November 1, 2021, and it was followed by a more personal announcement by store co-owner, Bill Zirinsky, on November 4th. Those announcements, which were also posted on Facebook, elicited an array of wonderful responses and comments which appeared on Facebook and elsewhere.

To Our Friends (especially our out-of-town friends):

We will be closing Crazy Wisdom Bookstore. This was a very difficult decision. We are sure we will grieve the loss of it as we would grieve the loss of a beloved.

Over the last few years, we've watched women and men in their 60's who have chosen to make changes in their lives, to give themselves space for a "second act" or opted to make life simpler or more pleasurable, in some fashion. The next years will go by all too quickly.

We've parented 4 kids. And for the last 27 years, we've always had a child under 13 in the house. With Grace's Bat Mitzvah a few weeks ago, we have crossed that threshold. This is a month of transitions for our family.

We have put our hearts fully into this wonderful bookstore, and we are both deeply proud of how it has come to be respected, loved and appreciated.

The response locally has been an outpouring of sweet and moving and heartfelt comments, and they have been music to our ears.

November 1, 2021
Dear Crazy Wisdom Patrons,

We will be selling or closing the bricks-and-mortar Crazy Wisdom Bookstore on the eve of its 40th anniversary, and after a third of a century of our owning it – on the day after Valentine's Day 2022.

Meanwhile, we'll continue to expand The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal (print and online), which reaches 20,000 readers each issue, and enhance our digital presence with the Crazy Wisdom Biweekly Ezine, which started just 18 months ago during the pandemic, and is now reaching 8,000 readers a month.

We will also be reinvigorating our crazywisdom.net, crazywisdomjournal.com, shopcrazywisdom.com and AnnArborHolistic.com websites.

There is a relentlessness to a retail business – open 7 days a week, 360 days a year, and to the hamster-wheel aspect of staffing and management issues. Our own family has grown up, and we're in our 60's, and we're ready to look out upon a new and different horizon. The bookstore had a very profitable year (due to having closed the tea room at the onset of the pandemic), and that's not a bad way to go out!

We know that Crazy Wisdom has been a unique destination and special bookstore in our region, and treasured by its friends and customers. We and our longtime managers and staff, past and present, have so much gratitude for having had the privilege over these decades to serve people in our region who are searching in their lives — spiritually, psychologically, holistically, and in terms of sustainable and conscious living. We intend for Crazy Wisdom to continue to be a beacon of consciousness in the region, though perhaps not in the form of a brick-and-mortar retail business.

We own our lovely, renovated Main Street building, without debt, and it is not for sale. We will be taking some months to decide how to best use that building, and whether to continue a variety of consciousness-related projects from that base. So, in a sense, Crazy Wisdom's bookstore operation will go "on sabbatical" as we consider our next steps. At the same time, we invite and encourage others with a vision, younger than ourselves, to step into the role of providing a safe haven for seekers and countercultural imaginings.

We welcome any serious inquiries into buying the bookstore, and renting the space, or related ideas. Please email us at: billz@crazywisdom.net

With deep gratitude,

Bill Zirinsky and Ruth Schekter

An Outpouring of Love From the Community!

After our announcement of the closing of Crazy Wisdom's brick-and-mortar bookstore on Main Street in Ann Arbor, on February 15, 2022, we have received an outpouring of wonderful comments from the community. We wanted to share some of them with you.

"I'm so sad to hear you are closing! Crazy Wisdom is where I met my husband, and love of my life. You had just opened the Tea Room, I was in line to order, and right then and there we met. We ended up talking for hours that night. Today we've been together 22 years, and have 3 daughters. Thank you for being our special place and part our most cherished moments." — Jillian Addy

"Thank you for the truly special role your place has played in our community for so long. — Ann Sheppard

You have so much to be proud of and grateful for. Crazy Wisdom was a gift to the community and will be missed. Thanks for putting your heart and soul into this worthwhile endeavor for so long. — Bill Taylor

"Many blessings to you as you consider your next steps. This kind of transition is obviously being entered into with a lot of consideration and compassion. May you have a clear sense of direction and the correct connections to create your next chapter." — Donna Sink Copeland

Congrats on taking this next step in your life and on how much you have given to the AA community over 40 years. Crazy Wisdom is a legend. Your community building and work will live on. — Katherine Towler

Congratulations, Bill and Ruth! What a beautiful journey you have shared . . . filled with passion, love, and purpose. Thank you for the gift of 'Crazy Wisdom.' May the next chapter bring joy and fulfillment to you and your family.
— Patricia M. Garcia

You brought something measurably beautiful and worthwhile to our community for many years! Well done you two, and all your staff. —Lisa Gottlieb

Well done. Bravissimo!
— Burton Miller

"Crazy Wisdom is closing their store. My heart is broken, but I understand—the wonderful couple who own it are getting older - wanting to focus on their online presence and their desire to raise consciousness. This place, which has been more than a "store" to me, is where I have met my best of friends, where I went to find my balance, knowledge, and inner peace. After my final divorce proceedings, I walked into the store and was embraced by the love that this place possessed. It simply soothed my soul. Crazy Wisdom was my destination when going downtown. Anytime I walked in, I inhaled and felt I was home. The people who work there are truly the best and I will miss not being able to see them. I have a few months left to inhale—and hope that someone will buy/rent the space and continue their tradition." — Moira Payne "aww, this place was synonymous with my growing up in A2 . I found it to be an oasis for my curious mind. thanks for making the world a better place one book at a time:) will always have fond memories" — Tas Tsementzis

I will forever be grateful to you, Ruth and Bill. Your work, through Crazy Wisdom, created the spark which gave our community the possibility of something magical. I'm guessing most of this magic happened unbeknownst to you… but now the secret's out…

—Josh Pokempner

I'm so sad to hear you are closing! Crazy Wisdom is where I met my husband, and love of my life. You had just opened the Tea Room, I was in line to order, and right then and there we met. We ended up talking for hours that night. Today we've been together 22 years, and have 3 daughters. Thank you for being our special place and part of our most cherished moments. — Karlta Zarley

"Thanks for the amazing way in which you have held space for expanding consciousness in SE Michigan." — Lindsay Passmore

"You have served and enriched your/our Ann Arbor community and beyond so well all these many years! Thank you very much - with all best wishes for whatever adventure and magic lies ahead. Much love and appreciation to you all! —Kathy Foxworthy Laritz

Ruth Schekter and Bill Zirinsky, your impact on our community is one of generosity, integrity, and love. Thank you for Crazy Wisdom's 40 years, your heartfelt writing, and your unique, grounded presence.

— Harvey Pillersdorf

"Your bookstore provided me with some of the most deeply profound changes in my life and best experiences of growth as a result of the books I bought in your store. I'm so sad to see you go, but hope you'll fill the space with more enlightened, diverse, consciousness raising opportunity." — Kristen Clore

"This is very sad news you guys were the main reason we drove out to Ann Arbor it's such a peaceful place I'm sad to see such a unique spiritual place of knowledge unusual things to find tea and peace be gone if you can please have an online store we absolutely love crazy wisdom" — Cherie Lucas

* * *

"I guess it is crazy wisdom to close.

(From Trungpa:"Crazy wisdom is about having a free mind, one that is not held down by preconceived notions or cultural conventions. Crazy Wisdom is about living in this moment, rather than having all of our perceptions colored by what we think about the past, the future, or the ideas we have about things.")"

— Ellen Sapper

"I'm so so sad to read this. Please say it's not true. Your store is one of my most favorite places on earth and the thought of you not being there breaks my heart. I understand the impact of the pandemic and can't imagine how hard the last year and half has been. My heart goes out to you. I wish you all the best and will forever be thankful for having discovered your store when I first visited the art fair 10 years ago. I have many many cherished memories of being in your store and the tearoom. Blessings to you all as you move forward with your new ventures."

— Debbie Collins

Don't believe the rumors!

We will be expanding
The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal,
in print and online, and our online
Biweekly Ezine, and maintaining our
crazywisdom.net and crazywisdomjournal.com
websites, plus shopcrazywisdom.com
and AnnArborHolistic.com

"My wife & I have been coming into town, sometimes specifically to visit Crazy Wisdom bookstore, for many years. You will be missed. A true Ann Arbor landmark. Good luck in your next endeavors." — Jim Grenoble

Ruth Schekter and Bill Zirinsky, it is a pleasure to hear about your thoughtful decision to step away from CW retail after more than 3 decades. Times flies! Beauty, books, exquisite sensitivity to decor, a place to rest and feel at home, a tea room to visit and relax with friends, a community room, live music, and speakers… CW has been a tremendous gift to the community the magnitude of which will likely only be fully realized in its absence.

I am excited you two are venturing into the unknown. Can't wait to see what comes your way. Love and all good wishes to you and the staff, past and present!

— Molly Reno

"This breaks the piece of my heart that will always and ever belong to Crazy Wisdom. I'm so glad I was a part of its history, but beyond sad that it's over, at least in its current state. Bill and Ruth, I wish you all the best as you enter this next phase of your journey. Thank you for making Crazy Wisdom the gem that it is"

— Susie Keat

"Crazy Wisdom played a very special, significant role in my life and development. I am forever grateful to you and Ruth - and all of the others who helped make it the special place it is. Congratulations on this transition." — Alyssa Northrop

Continued on next page

An Outpouring of Love From the Community!

Continued from previous page

Congratulations and much gratitude to you. Crazy Wisdom Bookstore and Tea Room has been a pillar of light in our Ann Arbor downtown for so long-- it's hard not to feel some pangs of sadness with the announced change. That said, I am sure this was a measured decision, born out of recognition that everything changes. As I've aged myself, I note my more graceful changes have been with recognition and acceptance of the time to do so, rather than with kicking and screaming...lol. I can't wait to see what your next venture will be. May the universe open to some amazing possibility so that the space and community support it has provided will remain.
— Mary Frances Spence

Crazy Wisdom is a staple of Ann Arbor and is a must whenever my husband and I stop in town. I'm so sad to hear it will be closing. Thank you for building this gem of a place and community around enlightenment. Heartfelt wishes for your next chapter.
— April Spicer

Very sad to hear that your wonderful store will be closing. It is one of the last shops in Ann Arbor that I enjoyed going to. It was easy to spend hours there looking at books, gems, jewelry, candles, CDs, goddess statues, beautiful greeting cards, essential oils, and so much more. — Jane Brundage

* * *

I was simultaneously so sad to read the news, and happy for you and Ruth and what this might mean for your family. I adore Crazy Wisdom and love all that you've shared with this community over the years. *The Crazy Wisdom Journal* continues this in a different way, and I cannot wait to see how your work and journey evolves. Looking forward to shopping at Crazy Wisdom for fabulous holiday presents and soaking up the space these next few months. Thank you for everything!
— Susan Ratcliffe Westhoff

"Extremely heartbreaking! CW is my all time favorite bookstore and have spent many a years now in its cozy nooks and corners reading and sipping tea. It was my "go to" place whenever I needed to unwind and spend time with myself. I grew by leaps and bounds with it spiritually aesthetically and culturally. Not only the most loved place by me but also my family members! The collection of books is like no other, specially handpicked for its customers and voracious readers. CW's nurturing space will be immensely missed for its amalgamation of all cultures it's vibe and magic. Good luck as you move forward and make new beginnings." — Avni Shah

Though I am sorry to see the "old" Crazy Wisdom Bookstore leave our community, I am so happy for you and for your new evolving vision of yourselves. I support this new exploration of yours and am grateful for the platform you provided for our community. I so appreciate all the Salons I facilitated at the bookstore that brought together so many of our community thinkers, leaders, movers and shakers to explore a diverse range of current topics. The CW Journal you created, and the online presence, continues helping our community members connect with each other and understand the rich diversity of options for healing and learning and growing. Sending blessings.
— Lucinda Kurtz

Thank you for continuing to bring cohesiveness, on so many levels, to our community. Crazy Wisdom Bookstore will be remembered fondly by so many for years to come. Wishing you both good health, joy and contentment as the next path begins to reveal itself. — David Ufer

"The love, community and consciousness you helped create could be felt walking in the store or opening the pages of the journal. Beautiful." — Dennis Muzzi

"Thank you for everything you've done for our community and for me personally. My own journey blossomed more fully because of Crazy Wisdom. I'll always have many wonderful memories of the times I spent combing the shelves, learning new skills in the upstairs meeting room, and making new friends in your store. Wishing you all the best in your next chapter." — Lori O'Dell

Magnificent contributions to the community, our journeys continue! Blessings in every way! — Beth Bailey Barbeau

* * *

"Thanks for all the years of running Crazy Wisdom! I met my fiance in the tea room, and we were so happy you let us take our engagement pictures upstairs even though it was closed. Thank you so much for that, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors." — Tommy Coupar

"I am so sad that Crazy Wisdom will be closing as it is one of my favorite places in Ann Arbor. Thank you for all the wonderful treasures I found on countless visits to your lovely store. Wishing you blessings and joy in your next chapter."
— Elaine Wong

"Congrats, Bill and Ruth! Sending you both much love as you make this transition. The store has been such a beautiful gift to our community these many years! And I'm glad to have had my part in it" — Abbie Stählin Gentry

"CW is my favorite store in town. I will miss it desperately, and now I need to visit a few times before you close (or transform) the space. Thank you for all the many ways you have served the community. CW is one of the top 3 places I always take visitors to - I'll miss the safe, calm, energy I always feel when I'm inside the shop. Thank you and Be Well!" — Tracey Marchyok

Mazal Tov to both of you; on your exceptional life, on your exceptional family, your history of love and comfort to all, and to your continued efforts to enrich all those around you. Our community has been enriched through having Crazy Wisdom in our lives, as well as your combined love and energy. Best of everything for your future endeavors and mazal tov to your children's successes.
—Neal Elyakin

"Discovered this place when I was in junior high. My stepdad used to take me and my friends to Ann Arbor from Napoleon and we would always stop here. Ugh so sad."

— Kait Lorraine

* * *

Bill and Ruth, thank you for your many, many contributions to communities of practice seeking healing and social change and to innovating on behalf of values for the most part absent in retailing and communication. May you thrive in your next steps.
— James Crowfoot

Mazel Tov on the Bat Mitzvah of Grace, and the decision to close the most amazing, wondrous Crazy Wisdom. I will miss this magical bookstore, but I am excited about your decision to have more time to play and be. Yes, we all could take lessons from Bill Smith on the art of meandering. With love and gratitude.

— Deborah Roberts

"My strongest attachments were to their original location on 4th—oh, the little jingle as you opened that wooden door, the immediate immersing and embracing incense, the always perfect cd playing, the narrow wooden meditation bench in the back section—everywhere peace, acceptance, a space and place and series of moments to just Be *and to know it.* When they moved to Main St, so many of us had to shift energies and grow just as CW was growing and changing, a reminder that we always take with us who and what we are. Time, in this physical reality, keeps moving, and here we are again. Here we are still. Sad and sweet, another passing, another opportunity for deep appreciation. Thanks for posting."

— Mary Mac

Crazy Wisdom is such an icon of Ann Arbor, and I have always felt a deeply personal energetic connection whenever I've visited. I was so sad to hear about its closing, but as others have echoed, I am sure it was a decision that was not made lightly. Sending love and compassion to you both as you take the next step in your life journey.

— Grace Pernecky

Courage made from love for yourself, your family, and the community. Arms around your decision and your big hearts! — Janice Fialka

I am absolutely so sad and devastated. This place is the place where my craft was birthed and i have purchased so many supplies and books here. So sad to see this place go and i hope it ends up not happening! — Madison Lutsey

The city of Ann Arbor has greatly benefited from your store and your commitment to the community and all things written and spiritual. Thank you both!!!

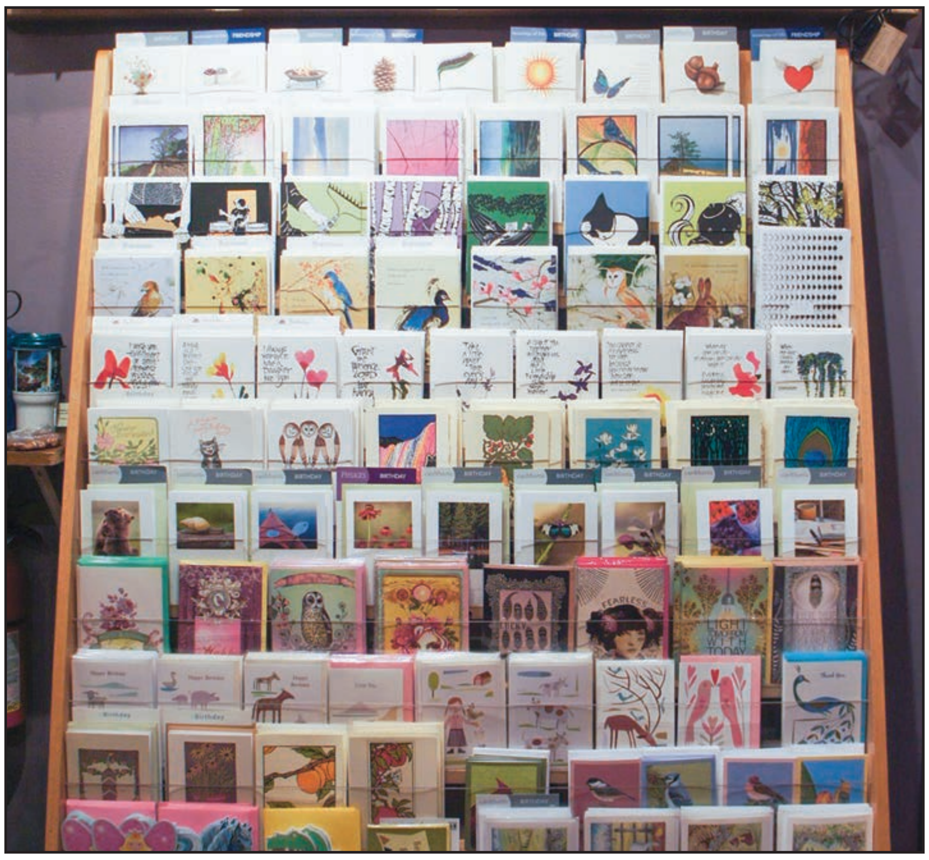
— Peter Schork

Way to go Bill and Ruth. You have greatly contributed to enriching the lives of those that came into your store and have ultimately changed the world for the better! Not bad at all. Can't wait to see your next adventure!

— Paul Uslan

Lovely and loving message, Bill and Ruth. I totally get it. Am excited for what comes next for you and for what comes next for the space that is being created inside of your beautiful building. All of my best as you move forward.

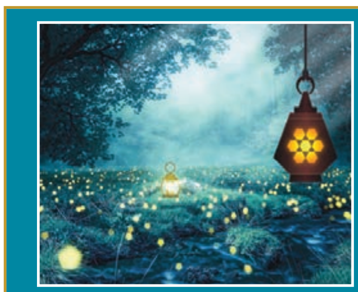
— Mary Anne Perrone



How sad! What a wonderful place…. It was like the Soul of AA. But all good things come to pass. Best wishes for your new journeys! — Mike

THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL

In This Issue ~



Page 18
Tending the Divine Feminine Flame
by Tara Beth

Page 30
What's New in the Community ~
Children's Book Author Nishi Singhal

Page 42
Restoration Through Ink
by Cashmere Morley

Page 48
Weekend Getaways ~
Greenleaf — A Southern Sanctuary
by Petula Brown

Page 55
The Food of the Gods — The Sacred Cacao Ceremony
by Victoria Schon

Page 72
The Process of 'Becoming' Through the Diamond Approach – As Taught and Practiced by Lou Weir
by Michelle McLemore

Page 87
Conscious Parenting Column ~
Supporting Mental Health During Pregnancy
by Melisa Schuster

Page 100
Full Moon Ceremony — Creating Sacred Space With Others
by Alicia Clark-Teper

CWJ Features

An Outpouring of Love From the Community! .... Page 5

Vipassana — A meditation for daily living
by John Orr .... Page 15

What We Can Predict
by Rev. Marie Duquette .... Page 17

Tending the Divine Feminine Flame
by Tara Beth .... Page 18

Linda Diane Feldt — Beloved Ann Arbor Healer,
the Very Embodiment of Crazy Wisdom in the Community .... Page 20

Faith and Doubt
by Brian O'Donnell .... Page 23

Restoration Through Ink
by Cashmere Morley .... Page 42

Bringing Nature Back to Our Yard —
Trading In Harmful Landscaping Habits for Healthy Sustainability
by Rosina Newton .... Page 64

Vivante — Notes from a Year of Dreaming Dangerously
by Irena Nagler .... Page 68

The Process of 'Becoming' Through the Diamond Approach –
As Taught and Practiced by Lou Weir
by Michelle McLemore .... Page 72

Moving Meditations and Comparative Prayer Forms –
An Exploration of Altering One's Consciousness Through Movement
by Michelle McLemore .... Page 76

CWJ Columns

Healers of Ann Arbor ~
Mindful Awakenings with Julie Woodward
by Laura K. Cowan .... Page 22

Our Yoga Column ~
by Katie Hoener .... Page 24

What's New in the Community ~
by Lynda Gronlund .... Page 30

Crysta Goes Visiting ~
by Crysta Coburn .... Page 38

Leaps of Faith ~
2 Dandelions Bookshop
by Laurel Decker .... Page 40

Out of My Comfort Zone ~
Leslie Blackburn .... Pages 44
Wasentha Young .... Pages 46

Weekend Getaways ~
Greenleaf — A Southern Sanctuary
by Petula Brown .... Page 48

Hand Crafting ~
Wet Felted Vessels
by Jennifer Carson .... Page 49

All Creatures Great and Small ~
Animal Hospice — Honoring Our Pets at the End Of Their Lives
by Monica Turenne .... Page 50

Random Acts of Kindness ~
International Neighbors — Sisters From All Around the World
by Madeline Strong Diehl .... Page 52

On the Cover

Master Wasentha Young

Master Young has been a practitioner since 1968. She is a founder of the Association of Women Martial Arts Instructors, and has taught at Omega Institute, Institute for Transpersonal Psychology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Rec and Ed, and for several other institutes nationally. For additional joy, she writes poetry and creates mosaic art.

Cover Photo by Edda Pacifico

CWJ Conscious and Tasty Eating and Nutrition

Food Section ....Starts on Page 53

Book Review: *Fermentation as Metaphor*
By Sandor Ellix Katz
Book Review by Catherine Carlson ....Page 54

The Food of the Gods — The Sacred Cacao Ceremony
by Victoria Schon..Page 55

Great Tastes in Local Foods —
by Crysta Coburn
The Ebenezer..Page 56
The Boro ....Page 56
MI Juice Garden ....Page 57

The Community Farm of Ann Arbor —
A Look at the Past, the Present, and the Future
by Sandor Slomovits...Page 58

Tea Time with Peggy — Think Spring! Think White Tea
by Peggy Alaniz..Page 63

CWJ Kids Section

The Crazy Wisdom Kids Section .... Starts on Page 86

Kids Book Reviews
by Sarah Newland... Page 86

Conscious Parenting Column ~
Supporting Mental Health During Pregnancy
by Melisa Schuster...Page 87

Crazy Wisdom Kids in the Community
Kids Volunteering Opportunities To Give Back To The Community
by Laura K. Cowan ....Page 88

CWJ The Calendar

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar Section
Calendar Edited by Michelle McLemore...............................Starts on Page 92
The Calendar..Page 92
Background Info on the Teachers...Page 110

Crazy Wisdom Manager Carol Karr ....Page 94
Crazy Wisdom Manager Sarah Newland ....Page 98

Talking While Walking
by Fran Adler ....Page 97

Full Moon Ceremony — Creating Sacred Space With Others
By Alicia Clark-Teper ....Page 100

Book Review: *The Nesting Place —*
It Doesn't Have to Be Perfect to Be Beautiful
By Myquillyn Smith
Book Review By Catherine Carlson ....Page 105

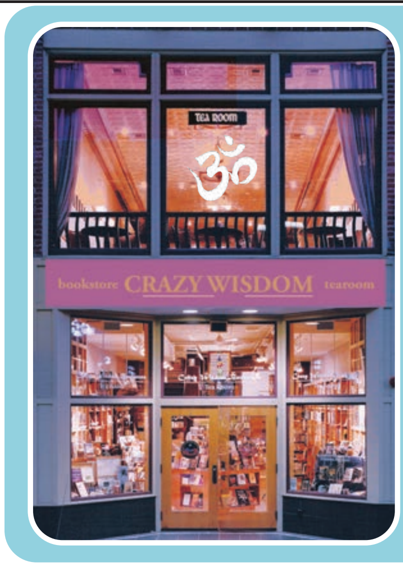
Collaborative Therapeutic Massage
By Ginger Chase ....Page 110

CWJ Advertisers

Resources for Conscious Living ....Starts on Page 25
Advertiser Directory..Page 12

CRAZYWISDOMJOURNAL.COM

— This issue will be posted on our website as of January 1, 2022 —



Serving the Community Since 1982

Crazy Wisdom
Bookstore
and Tea Room
114 S. Main St.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-665-2757

info@crazywisdom.net
crazywisdom.net

The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal
has been published
three times a year since 1995.
Copyright © Crazy Wisdom, Inc. —
December 2021

No parts of this publication may be reproduced for any reason without the express written approval of the publisher. There is a token fee charged if you would like to use an article in this publication on your website, so make sure to contact us first. Articles from back issues are available on our website's archive.

Crazy Wisdom Bookstore
was founded in 1982.
Since 1989, it has been owned by
Crazy Wisdom, Inc., which consists
of Bill Zirinsky and Ruth Schekter.

Design and Production Editor
Carol Karr
Designers: Jennifer Carson, Carol Karr

Managing Editor/Staff Coordinator
Jennifer Carson

Editing
Ann Alvarez, Jennifer Carson,
Crysta Coburn, Michelle McLemore

Writers
Peggy Alaniz, Ann Alvarez,
Petula Brown, Catherine Carlson,
Catherine Carr, Crysta Coburn,
Laura K. Cowan, Madeline Strong Diehl,
Lynda Gronlund, Rosina S.K. Newton,
Katie Hoener, Laurel Decker Hogge,
Diane Majeske, Michelle McLemore,
Cashmere Morley, Irene Nagler,
Sibel Ozer, Sandor Slomovits

Artwork
Jacob Bauman, Jennifer Carson,
Logynn Hailley

Photography
Senior Photographer: Linda Lawson
Susan Ayer, Mary Bortmas,
Rachel Everheart, Tobi Hollander,
Kate Jackman, Hilary Nichols,
Edda Pacifico, Joni Strickfaden,
Rachael Waring, Jennifer Wooley

Distribution
Richard Knapp, Paul Stehle

Advertising Sales Manager
Tana Dean

Calendar Staff
Jennifer Carson, Michelle McLemore

Publisher/Editorial Director
Bill Zirinsky

This issue is distributed starting in the last week of December.

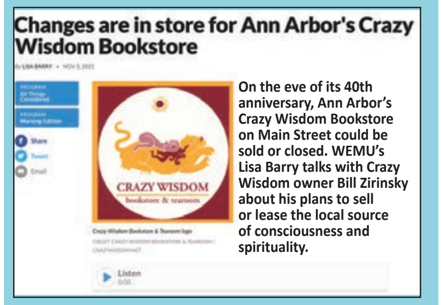
The deadline for Free Calendar submissions for the May through August 2022 issue is Tuesday, March 15, 2022.

Contact calendarforms@crazywisdom.net

The deadline for Paid Advertising is Tuesday, March 29, 2022

Contact tana@crazywisdomnet

Listen to the interview with Crazy Wisdom's co-owner, Bill Zirinsky, on All Things Considered with Lisa Barry.



Changes are in store for Ann Arbor's Crazy Wisdom Bookstore

On the eve of its 40th anniversary, Ann Arbor's Crazy Wisdom Bookstore on Main Street could be sold or closed. WEMU's Lisa Barry talks with Crazy Wisdom owner Bill Zirinsky about his plans to sell or lease the local source of consciousness and spirituality.

Changes are in store for Ann Arbor's Crazy Wisdom Bookstore by LISA BARRY NOV 3, 2021

https://bit.ly/LisaBarry

Advertiser Directory

A Mess of Photos Art by Mary Getz	26
Ann Arbor Pharmacy	47
Ann Arbor School of Massage	26
Arcana Press	51
Art and Element/Cherie Haney	26
Artsy Barn Cat/ Author/Illustrator Dori Durbin	26
Back 2 Basics Health and Nutrition/ Juli Johnson	27
Beth Dulka	25
Bgreen, Inc.	29
Bio Energy Medical Center	4
Bobbi Kowalski	14
BVI Ayurvedic	25
Carol Trembath, author	89
Castle Remedies	1
Cherie Ann McMullen	27
Community Farms of Ann Arbor	26
Conrad J. Welsing	27
Deep Spring Center	14
Denise Held	26
Divine Sanctuary	29
DNA Sales 2100	13
Dr. Raymond Kong / Acupuncturist	25
Earth Elements	71
Elizabeth Hurwitz Elder Law	27
Elizabeth Sullivan/ Ayurvedic Astrology	62
Evangelines Emporium	27
Eve Wilson	29, 51
Evenstar Institute	14
First Bite	107
Fran Adler	28
Frog Holler	62
Ginger Chase Massages	26
Grove Emotional Health	67
Healing Hands Physical Therapy	29
Healthy Births-Healthy Lives/Beth Barbeau	19
Henry Buchtel	25
Humane Society of Huron Valley/Tiny Lions	13
Iglesia Martell Holistic Law	36
Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth	19
Jennifer Stein	28
Jewel Heart	79
Judy Ramsey / Heart to Heart Animal Communication	25
Juli Woodward	19
Karlta Zarley	61
Kate Roos, MAAT, ATR	25
Kokopelli's Corner	47
Krasnick Regenerative Medicine	2
Leslie Science & Nature Center	89
Lighthouse Center Inc.	61
Liz Forman Hypnotherapy	27
Lori Curry	29
Lou Weir/ The Diamond Approach	36
Lovely Monkey Ink	45
Matthaei Botanical Gardens	4
McLaren Wealth	35
Melisa Schuster, LMSW	25
Michelle McLemore Healing Guide	41
Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education	104
Michigan Merinos/Happy Goat Lucky Farm	29
Monica Turenne / Four Paws Veterinary	51
Nanci Rose Gerler	28
Neighborhood Theatre Group	29
New Earth Home and Garden	28
Nia Spongberg	28
NITE - Naturopathic Institute	Inside Back Cover
Noel Kemeny	14
Northern Sky and Beyond/ Alice Davinich	25
Pacific Acupuncture Center	25
Peaceful Dragon School	47
People's Food Co-op	14
Pop Designs and Creations	27
Pott Farms	35
Readings with Gail	28
Roos Roast	53
Rosanne Emanuele	25
Rudolf Steiner School	Back Cover
Sacred Sexuality/ Leslie Blackburn	29
Seven Notes Natural Health/ Rob Meyer-Kukan	26
Steiner Health	61
Stephen Rassi / Chrysalis Facilitation and Counseling	28
Susan McGraw	28
Suzy Wienckowski/ Reiki	29
Symmetry Biofield Therapy	81
The Book Coach	70
The Celebrated Heart	43
The Intentional Living Collective	Inside Front Cover
The Sambodh Center for Human Excellence	27
Transitions LLC/Linda Bender	28
Triple Crane Monastery	101
True Healing Center	28
2 Dandelions Bookshop	35
Urban Rider Cargo Bikes	4
Valiant Realty Michigan/ Linda B. Long	35
Victoria Schon	45
Winewood Organcis	2
Wonder-Twinning	27

EXPAND YOUR BUSINESS HORIZONS!

Join our family of satisfied advertisers ...

As a metaphysical, spiritual tool, and gift shop that also offers Reiki, **Crazy Wisdom Community Journal fits us perfectly. We have been advertising with them since our opening in 2018**. They have been fantastic to work with and even helped us by offering online advertising and talking us up on their social media. Tana is always there with an answer. She's quick to offer suggestions or reminders when asked and our ads always come out looking beautiful. I have no doubt we will be working with them for years to come.

—Kristen Madrid, Owner, Earth Elements

"Being local and supporting local is what we do! **Sharing those values with the Crazy Wisdom Community Journal is why we advertise** with them. They are an amazing resource for folks in the community to learn about what's happening.

—Ken Davis, Marketing Director, People's Food Co-op

"**My advertisement in the Crazy Wisdom Journal brings me a lot of business.** People come in saying they saw my ad in the Journal. Generally, I have found that word of mouth is the best way to build business, but **advertising in Crazy Wisdom Journal has really paid for itself. I love you guys!!**"

— Cathy Boaz, Owner, Kokopelli's Korner

Advertise in The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal *and reach over 25,000 loyal readers in southeastern Michigan interested in a healthy, holistic, and conscious lifestyle!*

Meet Some of Our Creative Team

We sincerely appreciate all the talent that gets put to work to bring you the best Crazy Wisdom Community Journal three times a year, and wanted to highlight different contributors from each issue in this space. Look for us to highlight some of our contributors in every issue.

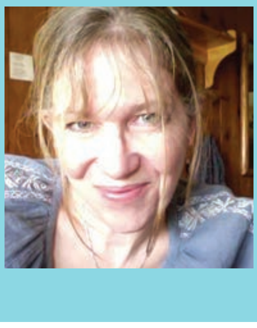
Rosina Newton wrote the article *Bringing Nature Back to Our Yard* in this issue. She is the owner of New Earth Home and Garden, serving as horticulturist, public speaker, and landscape designer. With over 35 years' experience "in the field," she is still awestruck with nature, from ants to Zanthoxylum americanum, and our connections therein. She also enjoys time with her husband, their spiritual practice, singing, dancing, making people laugh, and doing homework in the School of Life.

Irena Barbara Nagler's first word was "book." She has been writing fiction, poetry, and essays since childhood, and has worked in university and public libraries for many years. Her other childhood dream was to dance. She is a founder of Nightfire Dance Theater, active since 1997, performing mythic and dream-based dance, and teaching environmental movement meditation. In writing, visual art, and dance, Irena's approach is to unify and blend, gently dissolving barriers between worlds.

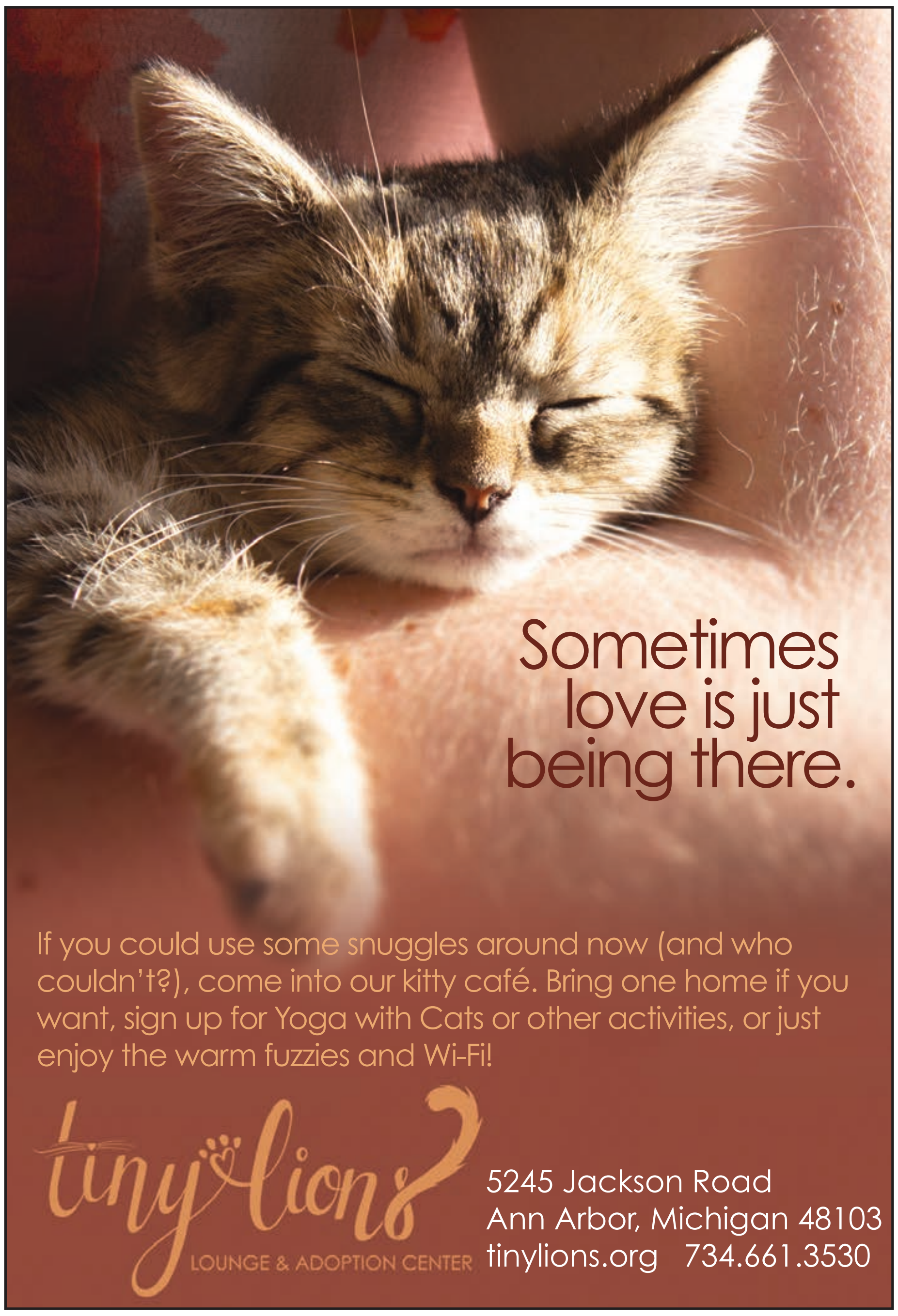
Edda Pacifico is an Ann Arbor-based, internationally published, portrait photographer. You can see her photographs displayed at the University of Michigan Medical Center, Cancer Center, and CS Mott Children's Hospital. Aside from photography, she is passionate about travel. You can follow her adventures on her Instagram account @Edda_. Edda took our cover shot, and the Tai Chi photos in this issues's Moving Meditations article.

Petula Brown has been writing the Weekend Getaway column and other travel-related articles for The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal since 2005. She grew up in New York City and moved to Michigan to earn a graduate degree from the University of Michigan. When not writing, traveling, or managing health care information technology projects, she serves community non-profits, most recently joining the board of Unity of Ann Arbor.

Katie Hoener has been writing for *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* as the yoga columnist since Fall 2016. She is an E-RYT 200 and RYT 500, with her yoga certifications from Sun Moon in Ann Arbor. Additionally, Katie is a Master's Level Social Worker and proudly works for Washtenaw County Community Mental Health. Katie is passionate that yoga is available and supportive to everyone in their journey to truth, recovery, and wholeness.



Michelle Wilbert is a certified Amherst Writers and Artists writing workshop leader and a spiritual director in private practice working within the contemplative spiritual traditions. She is also a retired midwife, and was steward of the Crazy Wisdom weekend music series starting in 2015, and continues working with *The Crazy Wisdom Biweekly* providing musician spotlight interviews. Wilbert is a an urban homesteader with her husband Ben, their daughter Mary, Andy the Farm Dog, and Shadow the Cat.



If you could use some snuggles around now (and who couldn't?), come into our kitty café. Bring one home if you want, sign up for Yoga with Cats or other activities, or just enjoy the warm fuzzies and Wi-Fi!

tiny lions
LOUNGE & ADOPTION CENTER

5245 Jackson Road
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103
tinylions.org 734.661.3530

Lenawee County's
LARGEST
Crystal & Rock Shop!

Offering Aura Photography Sessions

Your Wellbeing is our Reason for Being

DNA Sales 2100
Metaphysical & Natural Store

406 North Pearl Street
Tecumseh, MI 49286
517-605-9720
517-424-2903

DNAsales2100.com
ann@dnasales2100.com
DNA Sales 2100
instagram.com/dnasales2100

IAOTH Member
www.iaoth.com

Find us Online

IT'S COLD AND FLU SEASON!

It's all about self-care, stock up on the essentials.

PEOPLE'S FOOD CO-OP
NATURAL FOODS MARKET & DELI

$5 OFF WITH YOUR NEXT PURCHASE OF $25 OR MORE

COUPON IS GOOD FOR IN-STORE VISIT ONLY

Must present coupon at the time of purchase. No other discounts apply. Gift cards, case purchases, Co-op cash card, beer or wine cannot be used with purchase. Limit one offer per customer, one coupon per transaction.

OFFER EXPIRES 4/30/2022 Cashiers write transaction total: ________________________

Deep Spring Center
for Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry

Winter/Spring Programs

The Eden Project, Classes, Retreats, and Silent Meditation all via Zoom

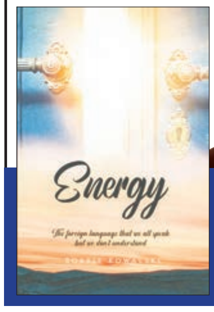
Join us on our path to living a life of loving kindness with non-harm to all beings. Experience the wisdom and compassion of Aaron, as channeled by our founder and guiding teacher, Barbara Brodsky.

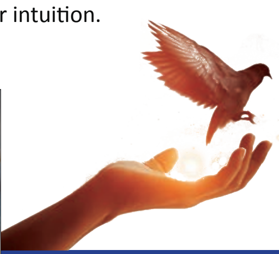
DeepSpring.org | info@deepspring.org | 734.477.5848

Deep Spring Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit. See website for details.

Energy: The foreign language we all speak but don't understand

A book that takes the reader on a journey of life, getting lost in challenges and pain and finding their way out filled with joy and love. As I open the door to my spiritual closet, I invite you to read these pages with the eyes of your soul. I offer you the chance to look at life with a new perspective. Each day we navigate our daily life by using our intellect, but if we dig deeper we can complement this with our intuition. To learn the language of the soul we can find our human connection with one another, nature, the animal world as well as the Universe. This will enable each one of us to learn to speak a language that will improve compassionate action, improve the health and wellbeing of our physical body as well as grow stronger in our intuition.





Follow your soul, it knows the way

Local Author
Bobbie Kowalski

Purchase at https://amzn.to/3sX2eCr
Paperback $15 and also available for Kindle
Facebook: @Energybybobbiekowalski
Bobbiekowalski@gmail.com

NOEL KEMENY

TRANSFORMATIONAL INTUITIVE GUIDE,
COACH
&
ENERGY HEALER

NOELKEMENY.COM
NOELKEMENY@YAHOO.COM

Are you living in alignment with your soul's passion and purpose?

Do you feel depleted physically, emotionally, mentally, and energetically?

Take My Hand
and Let's Journey Inward…

INSTAGRAM @NOELK23

If you are looking for an intuitive coach or would like to explore energy healing, please check out her website. She would be honored to partner with you on your journey towards the next greatest version of yourself and towards deep inner healing.

EVENSTAR INSTITUTE

EVOLVE & ENRICH *your life*

Winter and Spring Courses

ENROLLING NOW

Classes online and in person.

www.evenstarschalice.com/courses
Evenstar.Institute@gmail.com

Photo courtesy of Jonathan Borba from Unsplash

Vipassana:

a meditation for daily living

By John Orr

There is a wonderful meditation practice that was taught by Gautama Buddha more than 2500 years ago called Vipassana. Vipassana, sometimes referred to as Insight Meditation, helps us to cultivate inner calmness and exceptionally clear seeing into our present moment experience, whatever that may be. I learned this practice as a Theravada Buddhist monk in Thailand in the 1970's and it continues to be my foundational meditation practice to this day.

When I lived in a Thai monastery, there were two aspects to the development of our meditation practice. One was a formal sitting and walking meditation with a particular emphasis on being mindful of our body and breathing. Mindfulness of the body is a very good anchor and reference point for deeper awareness. Paying attention to our posture and the various sensations that arise in our bodies when we sit, stand, and walk, helps us to feel more embodied and present focused. Especially these days, when many of us spend considerable amounts of time in front of computers and other digital devices. If we can spend just a minute being aware of our bodies sitting in a chair and our feet touching the ground, we are establishing mindfulness of the body and feel more present. If we take the practice a little further and begin to pay attention to the sensations of breathing as air enters and leaves our bodies, we can feel increasing focus and calmness. When we are present with our bodies and breath, we gradually experience less wandering of mind and mental agitation. We begin to see our thoughts and emotions with more clarity and spaciousness. Our whole mental process begins to slow down, and we become less entangled in our thinking and can make more skillful choices for ourselves and those we love.

> *Mindfulness, which is the primary tool of Vipassana, helps us to see the feelings of unworthiness as just another aspect of our conditioned minds.*

For example, if we are experiencing fear and negativity around a certain situation that is happening for us at home or work and we are able to be aware of sensations of tension or tightness in the abdomen, shoulders, or jaw, it will help us to recognize we are feeling fearful of something and able to hold ourselves in a kind attention. We may ask ourselves, what am I fearful of right now? Am I fearful of being overwhelmed by the demands of my job and all that has to be done at home? Am I scared that my own needs will not be met? Mindfulness allows us to be present with what we are experiencing and skillfully relate to it with increasing kindness, attention, and spaciousness. That which is aware of fear isn't fearful. That which is aware of anger isn't angry. Increasingly we rest in awareness itself and therefore not caught in the energy of the fear and negativity and the myriad stories that are spawned in our minds. Therein lies peace and freedom. Buddha placed great emphasis on freedom from suffering and this is made possible by being present with our experience, and skillfully relating to it, so we don't get caught in habitual patterns of fear and reactivity.

A habit pattern that many of us experience is a fear of being unworthy or inadequate—a vague, or even more profound, feeling of shame or that there is "something wrong with me." Mindfulness, which is the primary tool of Vipassana, helps us to see the feelings of unworthiness as just another aspect of our conditioned minds. Each time the feelings of inadequacy or unworthiness arise we can mentally note 'feeling unworthy' or 'feeling less than.' When we are present and clear with what we are experiencing in the moment, we are much less likely to get caught up in all the stories of how and why we aren't up to snuff! These are ancient beliefs about ourself that we carry around like a backpack of heavy stones. It weighs us down and make us feel miserable about ourselves. A formal meditation practice will help us to key in on the most prevalent habitual mental patterns we experience. Perhaps it's fear that my financial or emotional needs will not be met. Concern I will be alone and lonely, or fear that I'm not safe in this world. Vipassana meditation helps us to see these and other habitual patterns with clarity and spaciousness. As we become aware of these habit energies, and not so sucked into the stories related to them, they begin to fall apart because we aren't feeding them with unconscious thoughts. This is the power of Vipassana.

The second aspect of Vipassana Meditation is our informal practice 'off the cushion.' One of my Thai teachers, Ajahn Chah, placed great emphasis on doing one thing at a time with as much mindfulness as we could muster. Whether it be early morning chanting, collecting our food on alms round, eating our meal, drawing and carrying water from the well, sewing our monks' robes or any of the other daily activities that comprised our practice. Indeed, there was no distinction between formal sitting meditation and the opportunity to practice mindfulness in everyday activities. This combination of concentrated sitting, standing, and walking meditation, along with moment-to-moment mindfulness throughout the day, is the recipe for enlightened living.

Our western way of life can be busy and fast paced. We are conditioned to move quickly and too often mindlessly. To do otherwise requires an intention to be present with whatever it is we are engaged with in the moment. We can choose specific areas of daily life in which to bring more mindfulness. For example, this week we may intend to pay more attention to preparing our meals, washing the dishes, or driving the car without listening to music or the radio. If we choose one of these activities a week to focus on, gradually we will find ourselves being more present, less mentally scattered, and feeling more integrated into the various aspects of our lives. If we need to clean the house, we might as well do it mindfully and recognize if there is any aversion and resistance to doing it. Bringing attention to aversion and resistance to house cleaning will help us become aware of when there is aversion and resistance regarding other aspects of our lives. Remember, that which is aware of aversion is not averse and that which is aware of resistance isn't stuck in resistance. Practicing this way makes house cleaning and other activities much more meaningful and full of ease.

Mindfulness and Vipassana are great tools for living and we are fortunate to have them available to us during these uncertain and challenging times. This world we live in is going through a great transition and clarity of seeing, and our ability to keep our hearts open in kindness and compassion, is as important as it has ever been.

John Orr received Theravada Buddhist ordination and training for a period of eight years while living as a monk in the 1970's in Thailand and India. He has been teaching meditation and leading retreats at various centers around the world since 1980. After retiring from the faculty of Duke University, Orr relocated to his new home outside of Asheville, North Carolina, but still offers meditation classes and retreats through the Deep Spring Center in Ann Arbor, MI (deepspring.org) and you can see his full schedule or offerings at johnorrmeditation.com.

make sure to visit CrazyWisdomJournal.com

WELCOME ABOUT THE JOURNAL CRAZY WISDOM BIWEEKLY ADVERTISE WITH US COMMUNITY CALENDAR
CALENDAR SUBMISSIONS BLOG FEATURED STORIES AND COLUMNS JOURNAL ISSUES
HOLISTIC RESOURCE GUIDE JOB OPENINGS WRITER'S GUIDELINES SUBSCRIBE

read. interact. explore.

Southeastern Michigan's Conscious Living Magazine — a resource on mindfulness, healthy living, spiritual growth, psychology, conscious parenting, sustainability, and integrative medicine, plus community profiles, news, and events related to Southeastern Michigan's vibrant holistic community.

The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal has been published three times a year since 1995.

6,000 copies of **The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal** are printed,
and are available at more than 235 locations in the area,
with more distribution points being added all the time.

Full digital issues of the journal dating back
to 2009 available to read online or with the ISSUU app.

Hundreds of body/mind/spirit blogposts
written by over 100 local authors & practitioners.

A community calendar with hundreds of listings
of events, classes and worshops taking place in southeast michigan.

Information on submissions for writers, event listings,
advertisers and much more!

WHAT WE CAN PREDICT

By Rev. Marie Duquette

The Farmer's Almanac predicts a colder, flakier winter than usual for those of us who live in The Mitten. Normally this would not be worth noting, but there is no "normally" anymore, and so I do note it.

Maybe I note this prediction because at a time when truth seems to be elusive, and not being prepared threatens to be deadly, *The Farmer's Almanac* is a reliable source when it comes to foretelling the weather and helping people prepare. And it tips its hat to inclusivity, in that anyone is welcome to read and heed its advice—not just farmers. According to the *Old Farmer's Almanac* website, it is North America's most popular reference guide and oldest continuously published periodical.

The premiere issue was published in 1792 during George Washington's first term as president. By the second year, circulation had tripled from 3,000 to 9,000. Back then, the Almanac cost only six pence (about nine cents). While there were other almanacs being published at that time, The Old Farmer's Almanac's first editor, Robert B. Thomas, used a complex series of natural cycles to devise a secret weather forecasting formula, which brought uncannily accurate results, traditionally said to be 80 percent accurate. (Even today, his formula is kept safely tucked away in a black tin box at the Almanac offices in Dublin, New Hampshire.) The Almanac is 230 years old this year, and has had many editors and changes, still, many farmers continue to use it today as a planning tool based on the accuracy of its long-term weather forecasts.

Maybe I note that an abundance of cold flakiness will show up at our doors with gravitas, because we imagined that once we had a vaccine for the pandemic, life would snap back to normal fairly quickly, and it has neither snapped back quickly nor fairly.

And maybe I note the anticipated "more" of winter because it's good to have *something* to plan for! I make a mental note: need more sweaters, colder and flakier incoming.

I've been leading a series called "I've Been Meaning to Ask" that centers on these four questions:

Where are you from?

Where does it hurt?

What do you need?

Where do we go from here?

I am finding the last three questions especially useful to gauge how I'm doing on any given day, as we live into this time of unknowing, when we are processing trauma individually and collectively, while the trauma itself continues to fall around us, gathering on our shoulders.

Where does it hurt? Once we get through the flippant (where *doesn't* it hurt?), the given (my heart), and the vague (motions, palm up, at the air around me), it becomes clear that we hurt in innumerable places. Carrying a broken heart for the loss of a specific person is heavy lifting; carrying it for the loss of an entire way of life can be paralyzing. My eyes hurt from looking at screens too much. My need for connection aches when I stop looking. My serenity has diminished, replaced with a sense of depletion from choosing daily between the acute, the chronic, and the mundane. Hour by hour I try to discern what I can change, what I cannot, and the difference between the two. It hurts when I allow myself to remember the lives, the loves, and the sense of safety that has been lost in the seemingly endless divisions between us that seem to multiply like the mops that terrorized the sorcerer's apprentice in *Fantasia*. It hurts to see the righteous vilified and the villains venerated. It hurts to see the heroic nurses and doctors, pleading for relief, and it hurts that they have to do so.

What do I need? I need less. Less stuff. Less lingering time. Less anxiety about making and breaking plans. Time is no longer punctuated by reliable routines: busy industry has been replaced by bare buildings, and people instinctively step away, rather than toward one another. I need to stop seeing dirty, discarded facemasks alongside the road, marring both gardens and gravel alike with reminders of a disease about which we need no reminders. I need communal song and hugs given with abandon and the uncovered smiles of seven-year-olds enamored with the space where a tooth had recently been. I need to stand shoulder to shoulder with theatergoers for long ovations and sit, satisfied, for rewarding encores.

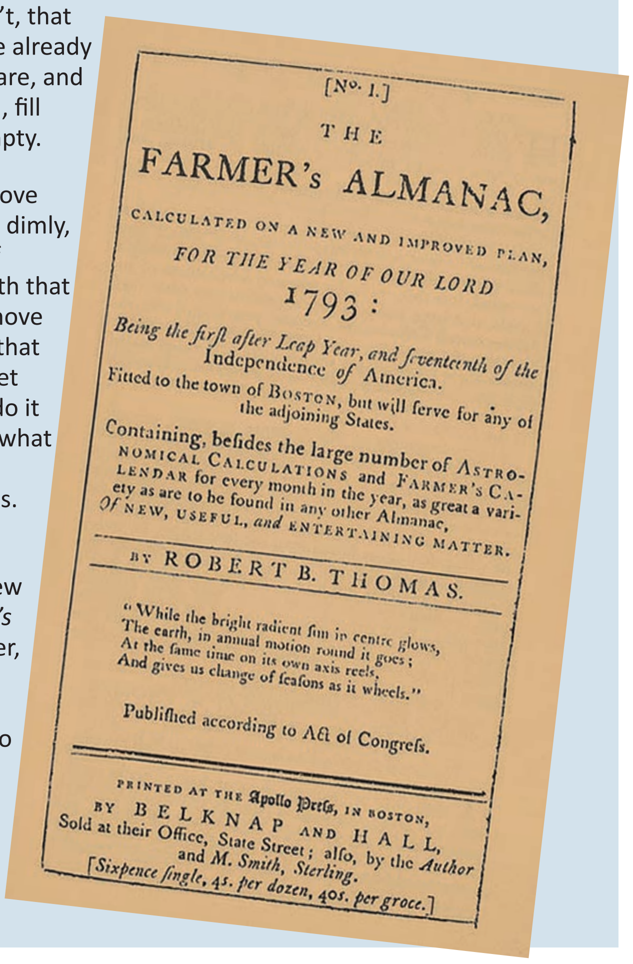
Where do we go from here? This is the hard one. It feels like we are in a plane that has not yet landed. We can't step out while mid-flight. And yet, beginning—taking steps toward something—is essential to recovering from, and moving through, trauma.

I propose we choose what we will move toward *now*, so that we do not freeze in fear when the colder, flakier days move in. I propose we begin to move from here to there, even if *there* is a moving target.

I choose to move toward connection, wherever and however I can find it. I choose to notice what is full, at least as often as I notice what is empty. I choose to imagine more gathering spaces outside—safe adaptations that give way to a more vital way of life and snow-laden paths that are cleared by those who can, without payment by those who can't, that lead to houses where those already warm, have sweaters to spare, and those whose bellies are full, fill those whose bellies are empty.

From here, I propose we move toward a *there* we only see dimly, trusting that the process of moving will be an act of faith that sustains us. I propose we move together, toward a society that is fueled by faith. *We will* get through this. One way we do it is to inventory what hurts, what we need, and where we go from here on a regular basis.

I propose we stock wood, and canned goods, and a few extra blankets. *The Farmer's Almanac* tell us that a flakier, colder winter is waiting in the wings. History tells us we will need one another to weather the storm.



[No. 1.]

THE

FARMER's ALMANAC,

CALCULATED ON A NEW AND IMPROVED PLAN,

FOR THE YEAR OF OUR LORD

1793:

Being the firſt after Leap Year, and ſeventeenth of the Independence *of* America.

Fitted to the town of BOSTON, but will ſerve for any of the adjoining States.

Containing, beſides the large number of ASTRONOMICAL CALCULATIONS and FARMER's CALENDAR for every month in the year, as great a variety as are to be found in any other Almanac, *Of* NEW, USEFUL, *and* ENTERTAINING MATTER.

BY ROBERT B. THOMAS.

"While the bright radient ſun in centre glows,
The earth, in annual motion round it goes;
At the ſame time on its own axis reels,
And gives us change of ſeaſons as it wheels."

Publiſhed according to Act of Congreſs.

PRINTED AT THE Apollo Preſs, IN BOSTON,
BY BELKNAP AND HALL,
Sold at their Office, State Street; alſo, by the *Author*
and *M. Smith, Sterling.*
[*Sixpence ſingle, 4s. per dozen, 40s. per groce.*]

Tending the Divine Feminine Flame

By Tara Beth

The moment I heard my first love story, I went looking for you. —Rumi.

I awoke in my first breath with a deep yen in my heart. My soul's purpose and mission on earth was to know the nature of the feminine and to find myself constantly in love with love and being loved. I searched for her, the face of the feminine divine, everywhere. I looked under stones, oh how I worshipped the woods. I dipped curious fingers into streams filled with crawfish because water was my solace. I leaned on trees and listened for her. In the night sky with winking stars and shining moon I would gaze, wishing to see a glimmering reflection of that which is in me. I devoured the power of femininity in women's narratives and every book my young fingers could grip. In the sanctuary of a church, and the ritual of song and word, I wished to feel her. My young soul was a deep well of wanting to know her. Our deepest desires are non-negotiable.

Desires will keep coming back. Like the shadow-self lurking in the recesses of your psyche, desire is a powerful force, and it will push until the whispers or screams are heard. My soul knew what I yearned for, but my conscious mind did not. I was searching blindly. I've always loved a good story of females who are strong, courageous, loved, and loving.

> In the night sky with winking stars and shining moon I would gaze, wishing to see a glimmering reflection of that which is in me.

I asked questions yet received answers that felt false. My favorite question was when my nine-year old self dropped a Bible at catechism class and the nun told me that I needed to say a number of Hail Mary prayers to atone. I curiously asked her if we weren't to worship anyone but God as the father, and as it was his book, why I would need to pray to her? Was she God the mother because she was his mother? Her answer spoke of reverence for the way that Mary served her God but nothing of her being holy or a vessel. You can imagine the reaction that I received from that interaction. I had a yearning for something deep, feminine, and spiritual that wasn't being met in the masculine, Christian, western society. Where was *she*?

She was elusive. In my awkward pre-teen years, I stumbled into a witch's store. The energy in that store drew me like a moth to a flame, I picked up a book. It was titled *Wicca: A Guide for the Solitary Practitioner* by Scott Cunningham. I chose it because inside the light pink cover, it contained the word GODDESS. It felt so radical to my teenage soul. It made me smile as though I had discovered some secret ancient wisdom. I remembered the joke on a mug my father was gifted with. It said, "When God Created Man, She Was Joking." Was *She* joking? *Could* God be a woman? It was there, in black and white on the pages. According to this book there was both a God and a Goddess and I could not have been more thrilled. I peeled page after page open and devoured it. I ate the book in its entirety. I took it so seriously and I have my original copy with all the highlighted passages to prove it. I set up an altar in my room. This had to be it for me; this had to be what was calling me!

Being a woodsy creature, I was no stranger to alone time in the forest. I went deep into the woods, and I intuitively built a giant stone circle, sweeping it clean and readying myself and the space. I needed to feel full in my spirituality—desperately needed to feel like my life in this human feminine form was just as godly as any man. I built the stone circle. I spoke the words. I called a rudimentary half-learned circle casting from the book and I demanded to meet God. Laying down on the soft earth of the woods, I closed my eyes and waited, but God did not come.

> Being a woodsy creature, I was no stranger to alone time in the forest. I went deep into the woods, and I intuitively built a giant stone circle, sweeping it clean and readying myself and the space.

I thought, God did not love me enough to find me. I was so sad. My young brain couldn't process it fully, but I know I stored another layer of "I am not good enough," another layer of "I am not worthy," another layer of "I am just a girl." She who wasn't a reflection of holiness. She who was innately flawed by original sin. I tucked the book away and headed into adolescence. I know in retrospect that I was not as ready to meet God that day as I had believed. I wasn't paying attention to the signs of *She*, even if she had shown up. I did not hear a change in the wind, a subtle shift in the call of the birds, or perhaps she really had not come to me after all on that day. Either way, I was lost, deflated, and without the spark that the maybe She as God had ignited in me. I dove headlong into the wave of societal norms and learned how to operate in a Goddess-lacking society.

Packing for college, on a whim of "maybe," I tucked that book into my suitcase and stole away with it. The irony of which is that I brought a witch's book right into the heart of my catholic institution. I used it to help write some feminist English language arts papers about the persecution of women in my favorite teacher's class. It got me a good talking to by a Catholic priest about how only a pagan believes in the duality of nature during a discussion of the origins of the devil. There are moments in life where one could've taken a faster route to happiness (like following my heart toward the Women and Gender Studies minor I asked about), however, I was still in the flood of societal norms and my Doctor of Pharmacy program had no space for the likes of *her*. By the time I graduated, I was so mixed up and lost that I felt outside of myself. I had married quickly, taken a job away from family, and I hated where I landed—away from family and unhappy in my profession. I sifted in and out of churches—looking for a woman's truth in spirit, a woman's place amongst the organs and frankincense—yet, I still could not find it. Even the most liberal of Episcopal churches spouted from the Bible words that never felt right to me. I tried so hard to be a good girl—a good Christian. I spent another decade stuck in the moment of a little girl who wasn't good enough to meet God on her own—a little girl who never felt right when she touched the supposedly sacred words of God the father.

> I thought, God did not love me enough to find me. I was so sad. My young brain couldn't process it fully, but I know I stored another layer of "I am not good enough," another layer of "I am not worthy," another layer of "I am just a girl."

I was broken. Miserable. Sometimes it takes a descent into darkness to finally see the light. My life had hit a valley and I was fully sitting in what I now coin "the existential crisis of a woman unfulfilled." I spiraled out of control. I was using alcohol and yoga as a spiritual band-aid, but it wasn't working anymore. I remembered myself as an unencumbered young girl, who always dressed like a witch, made magic potions from wildflowers, and prayed every night to the moon. One day I searched for the term "yoga and witchcraft" and that's when I found her—my teacher, Danielle Dulsky. She is, was, and always will be, the everything that I ever needed in that moment.

Dulsky stood in the shoes of the goddess that I sought. I went to study with her at the Moon House, her temple in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, and we descended. We did not search for the light but went intentionally into the dark. That space of shadow and sadness that I had been trapped in for years. She performed a ritual called Inanna's Descent, a ritual that I now use in my circles when I teach, and it rocked me so hard that the fractal cracks it created began to let the energy of feminine divine flood in. The feminine divine is mysterious, and I could not even begin to tell you exactly what magic took place that week in the Moon House, but as I studied books like *Awakening Shakti*, a yogic text centered around liberating yogic goddesses, something began to awaken inside me. It was the She-Ki, inside of me, not outside of me! Not an external force. To find the flame of the divine feminine, I had to look inside of my own flesh and bones. There she was the whole time waiting for me to discover her.

> Sometimes it takes a descent into darkness to finally see the light.

The energy that exploded within me has no words to describe it, but it is akin to joy. I drove home feeling as though I had taken a hit of some substance that drives all of the feel-good stuff into you. I was ecstatic and filled with transcendence. I'd found the secret sauce—*She* is lying dormant within our every cell and all we have to do is seek inward to find her.

The flame of the divine feminine lives within me. *She*, the female face of God, comes regularly to teach me. I've become a tender of the flame. I am a catalyst and holder of the SHE-KI, a form of reiki revealed to me by the spirit of Sophia, the holy feminine energies. The divine flame of Sophia is Christ's counterpart, a dancing flame that mirrors his healing flame (she reflects healing inward, and he reflects healing outward) and together they form the union of divine love for self and others. The imagery I have been shown is that of the lotus flower as it spins above and below the chakra centers. I have no words to describe the gratitude that is in my heart for her, the epic love I feel for her, and for all of those that I love. I am in love with love. I have found what I so yearned for.

Tara Beth is a pillar of light for the divine feminine. She has dedicated her life to tending the flames of healing for herself and for others. You can find her at her sanctuary, Ghidrah's Mystic She Ways, an apothecary and yoga sanctuary in Adrian, Michigan, and online at MysticSheWays.com. Visit Ghidrah's at 120 East Maumee Street in Adrian, MI. For hours, check online at ghidrahs.com. Read more about Gidrah's in the feature from Issue #7, Our Southern Neighbors*, at https://bit.ly/3CpzNBE.*

> The flame of the divine feminine lives within me. *She*, the female face of God, comes regularly to teach me. I've become a tender of the flame.

Julie Woodward, MSW, RYT-200

Coaching, Yoga, Meditation
Embodiment Practices
to cultivate resilience
and wellbeing

Now resgistering for fall classes:
Embodied Resilience
in Uncertain Times

www.juliewoodwardmsw.com
jawh@comcast.net

HEALTHY BIRTHS
HEALTHY LIVES

Mention Crazy Wisdom for 15% off your first consultation of 2021

NATURAL HEALTH CONSULTATIONS
FAMILY AND MATERNITY WELL-BEING
ONLINE CLASSES

HealthyBirthsHealthyLives.com

Crazy Wisdom Kids

An ongoing section of
The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal

Articles, calendar listings,
advertisements,
music and book reviews,
and other features
that focus on raising
conscious and spirited kids.

If you like our CW Kids
section, and would like
to contribute to it,
contact
jennifer@crazywisdom.net.
We welcome story ideas,
illustrations, feature writing,
and photographs.

Honoring All Spiritual
Paths & Traditions

Interfaith Center for
Spiritual Growth

Be a light unto the world

**704 Airport Blvd., Suite 1
Ann Arbor, 48108**

Sunday Celebration Services 10:45-12:15
Also: Nursery - Youth Education

Monthly Concerts, Movies
and Drum Circles

Weekly Study Groups,
A Course in Miracles,
Science of Mind, Sufi Meditation
& more

***Sunday Service and many classes
available via live stream,
in person gatherings may be limited in size,
see website for details.***

734.327.0270
interfaithspirit.org

LINDA DIANE FELDT,

BELOVED ANN ARBOR HEALER, THE VERY EMBODIMENT OF CRAZY WISDOM IN THE COMMUNITY.

The death of Linda Diane Feldt, at 62, on November 17th came as a shock to Ann Arbor's holistic subcultures. There was an immediate outpouring on Facebook of heartsickness and grief, a sense of being stunned that someone so integral, so key, could be gone in a flash. For those who didn't know her, or never came across her, it is hard to put into words the depth and range of her presence and her impact. We have had a holistic alternative healer/genius in our midst, for decades, and we all knew she was special, but took for granted that she would always be here, so no need to pay extra special attention to her gifts, to her very existence in our community. Though, as she said often in recent times, take nothing for granted.

Linda's work life ranged from being a counselor at Ozone House in her youth, (where I first met her when she was 16), to becoming a massage therapist, cranio-sacral therapist, and an herbalist. She notably became a profoundly special healer for young babies and their moms, doing cranio-sacral work on newborns, and she was immensely gifted in that specialized endeavor. She had an exceptionally gifted touch—she was an "organ whisperer" who could feel around the organs of the body and know what was going on, at much deeper levels than could readily be surmised by doctors and lesser bodymind therapists. But she engaged in so many ways—teaching health classes at Rudolf Steiner, leading nature walks, serving on civic boards—always teaching, always humble, always tuned in.

She was highly committed to ethics and professional boundaries, and served for a time on the boards of the American Massage Therapy Association and the national organization for Polarity Therapists. She was also deeply committed to her lifelong relationship with the town of Ann Arbor, and she was active as a pedestrian advocate. She was dedicated to the People's Food Co-op, and served as the President of its Board. And she loved her dogs.

The smattering of comments we've captured in the next pages from Facebook can only give a glimpse of her good works, love, dedication, and her subtle knowing and wisdom. She was a partner of Crazy Wisdom for 40 years, leading a Contributions to Wisdom lecture series for 15 years, and then teaching Herbal Wisdom classes at the bookstore.

Her death, in the same month that we announced the closing of the bookstore, seems to be no mere coincidence. She was the very embodiment of Crazy Wisdom in the Ann Arbor community.

Bill Zirinsky – Co-owner of Crazy Wisdom (with Ruth Schekter)

Richard Conto

November 17 at 9:41 PM

My wife, Linda Diane Feldt, died tonight. I am heartbroken. I have the support of her friends that she shared with me and have become my friends, but I also have other people too—and some of them are here. ..I had her in my life for just these past few short years. The depth of her friendships and relationships with so many people was a treasure—and the love she created is helping me.

Joanne Motino Bailey—I'm very sad to say that Richard's beloved wife and my dear friend Linda Diane Feldt died this afternoon. Richard and I were with her for her last moments. We will certainly celebrate her life with friends and family in the near future. More to come on that. Linda Diane was quirky and weird and also profoundly loving, generous and gifted. As she said when I last saw her - 'take nothing for granted'.

Charles Pippi Barbieri—We were all so blessed to have her come into our lives and all of the blessings that she gave unconditionally...

Abby Humphrey—Oh no! This is a huge loss to the community. I referred (people) to her all the time and was so grateful for her gifts. She will be deeply missed.

Deb Rhizal—Lighting a candle in her honor and memory, so grateful for her care, example, love of so many things, dedication to righting wrongs things, and so much more.

Jessica Kilbourn—Aw, wow. I am sad to hear this. Sending my condolences to all whose lives she touched, which was many. Tenderness and care.

Beth Q. Mount—We are all so incredibly grateful for her light in the world. She taught us all so much. She will be fiercely missed.

Beth Bailey Barbeau—Linda Diane was indeed a mighty force and bright mind, and her extraordinary gifts will be sorely missed by mothers and babies far and wide.

Laura Lea Staebler—Linda Diane was an amazing person, brilliant, loving, kind. I am blessed to have known her and shared friendship together. Much love and comfort to you, Richard and to you, Joanne. Please give an extra hug to Aisling (her dog) also.

Gaia Kile—It is easy to remember Linda Diane as one of the pillars of Ann Arbor's alternative healing community stretching back to when that community was small. In that capacity she was a practitioner, a teacher, a publisher, and a leader. But she was also a community activist. In childhood she campaigned to save an open field from development. She rose in youth activism to the national level where she learned that power brought with it control that she wisely pulled away from. I worked with her on the board of our beloved food co-op, she served in that capacity for 10 years, but her involvement in the co-op preceded that term and continued after. I don't know the extent to her involvement in community and causes, but whenever I spoke to her about such matters she was informed and had thoughtful opinions. Ann Arbor has lost one of its great citizens.

Cynthia Esseichick—Many people know of Linda Diane Feldt as a remarkably gifted healer. She welcomed babies into the world, supported their mamas, and treated countless people of all ages, in all stages of health or dysfunction. Her skill-set ranged from hands-on healing, massage, craniosacral and polarity therapy, to herbal medicine, nutrition, and beyond. Ethics mattered to Linda Diane. She wasn't afraid of controversy. Linda Diane volunteered tirelessly in support of the causes she believed in, advocating for her community, from local food to pedestrian and bicycle safety, and cared deeply for her beloved husband Richard, her animals, and countless friends and clients.

In addition to being a wise and skillful practitioner, Linda Diane loved to teach. She taught anyone who expressed interest or curiosity to learn from her, whether a lay person or seasoned professional. She was innately curious and open to exploring opposing or conflicting points of view, willing to understand complexity from multiple perspectives in true Aquarian fashion. She was a published author, led weed walks in local parks, taught classes sponsored by the co-op for many, years, and in her home right up until the pandemic. More recently, and in spite of her health challenges, she expressed a desire to continue to mentor her advanced students on a limited basis. She was forever generous with her time and with her knowledge.

On a more personal note, Linda Diane was my first mentor and teacher. She introduced me to many perspectives on healing and curious things such as raw goat's milk, burdock pesto, and the magic of serviceberries (which fruit all over town). From the 1990s through March of 2020, I had the good fortune to study intimately with Linda Diane, always learning something new. I continue to use techniques she taught me over the decades in my daily practice, with amazing results. Linda Diane taught magic. I feel fortunate to have been able to catch a bit of it. Of course, I will always wish I had caught a bit more. A lot more. Thank you, Linda Diane, for your friendship, kindness, support, encouragement, healing, love, and wisdom.

May your legacy continue to touch the lives of all in our community.

David M. Hall—I appreciated learning from her, too, and got to know her working at the People's Co-op. We spoke a lot about the co-op with her knowledge and history and she expressed her concerns about the direction it was headed, being so involved for decades. It was an honor to set up and promote her classes we sponsored—she was a wealth of wisdom. Ann Arbor was blessed by her commitment to being of service to others' well-being.

Vivienne Armentrout—She was a true Ann Arborite. A graduate of Community High, and her father, Allan Feldt, was a UM planning professor and one-time Planning Commission member. He was very active in the community. Linda first became known to me as a practicing herbalist and promoter of local food and wild food foraging. I still have her book, which contains recipes for wild greens. She was also heavily involved with the People's Food Coop. Later she became an active transportation activist, supporting walking and bicycling. Even after a severe health crisis involving sepsis (which can often be fatal, and evidently nearly was), she obtained a recumbent bicycle and attempted to use it. She married Richard Conto in 2018 (after her illness) and all of her friends rejoiced in seeing her in her lovely wedding dress. She was a real original, and made so many different contributions to the essence of Ann Arbor.

Dan Ezekiel—This is such sad news. Linda gifted so much creativity and lavished so much loving care to the community life of our town. Tears for those she leaves behind, we are poorer for her loss.

Catherine Smith—Such sad news. I knew Linda in Junior High and then later in the 80s/90s. She was an extraordinarily unique and authentic person. I always came away from our conversations with a new idea or perspective. My thoughts tonight are with her family and dear friends who face a terrible loss, as we all do. I'll be thinking of her laugh and smile.

Carol Rose Kahn—Barbara Feldt was an amazing woman, Linda did incredible work at Ozone House.

Elizabeth Gray—Linda looms so large in Community High School memories - active politically, present in every meeting, a challenger to traditional practices in education, a thinker—the school became stronger with her contributions. Quintessential alternative seeker.

Annie Ritter—I took a dog training class with her out at Country Kennel in Milan. She had such a wealth of knowledge about herbal health for dogs.

Daniel A Rubenstein—I did not know her, but, if anyone's interested, she was a prominent interview subject in the CHS documentary, "Welcome to Commie High." https://www.7cylinders.com/commie-high/

Dale E Withers Peck—Some may not know she was part of a State of Michigan Task Force for At Risk Children and Youth in the 1970s.

Marge Eide—So sorry to hear of Linda Diane Feldt's passing. She had a special healing spirit that she generously shared with those who needed it.

Michael Myers—This one's for Linda Diane Feldt who passed Saturday. May you dwell in beautiful, green places. I know you will. Thank you for the help you gave me when I was sick and down. You will be missed.

Kimberly Kay—Dear Linda Diane—I will miss you. Your sage advice, the fact that you helped me out when I had no insurance and no job...you cared for me and took the time to put my body back into shape when no doctor would touch me without cash. You were a good friend, a woman with the biggest heart for humanity. Many babies also received your precious touch. The world is a better place because of you.

Julie Frick—So Sad. I've known Linda since she was 16 and worked at Ozone house. Our paths have crossed in multiple ways. She was a healer extraordinaire and a tireless advocate for things Ann Arbor. I will miss her and the sweet smile she gave me whenever we saw each other.

Michelle Spurlock—May the Wisdom and Magic she held in this life, live on in the hearts and minds of the people.

Melissa Ellen Penn—A friend for 40 years. An inspiration and a in-spiration. There is a hole in the field of Ann Arbor today, that will be quite hard to fill. Travel on dear sister.

Courtney Klick—I worked with her when I was 19 yo. In fact, she was the first herbalist I ever met and worked with. It was a huge turning point to finally meet someone who truly wished to heal and knew how to be well with others. So sad and a huge wake up call to start appreciating all of you incredible healers out there!

Laura Ghiron —Many of us lost a precious and devoted friend yesterday. Linda Diane Feldt and I began our friendship with her as my caregiver, helping me untangle why I was getting headaches in grad school on most days at 3 pm. We evolved into lifelong confidantes. And I feel robbed and bereft with the sudden loss of her in our lives. She was a true gift to humanity. An easy mentor and teacher. Utterly unassuming and non-judgmental. Always encouraging, always guiding us to be our very best selves. Steadfastly standing by and always at the ready with words of wisdom and candor. The world is darkened with her loss.

And yet the gifts she gave us all - whether healing, suggesting lifestyle or posture edits, gentle nudges towards productivity and power, fine healthy food, unflinching friendship, mothering support, community building and safety—all too countless to recant—will remain. Hers is a legacy of blessings, bestowed on the lucky. Bestowed on a town she loved with all her heart. We have lost an Ann Arbor institution and I have lost one of the dearest and most unique friends I will ever know and be graced to have had to accompany me on this amazing journey. Thank you for a life well-lived and so graciously shared with us, Linda Diane. I will always love and appreciate you and your many gifts.

Tim Bowes—The conversations that she and I had were boundless in their scope of exploration, and explore we did. From foraging for wild foods, organic gardening at her cabin, cooking, listening to her teaching at Crazy Wisdom, kayaking on the lake with Rex traversing between her kayak and mine, traveling to Sweden and Norway, catching Leonard Cohen's last tour, and sharing in our love of singing, just to name a few. It was painful for me to see her go from carrying sacks of concrete when we first met and were putting the benches in at the cabin, to her depleted physical state at the end, but through it all it was her, it was her ever-shining and ever-generous spirit and profound love of her friends that best showed the marvelous person that she was. Like you I will miss her but will always be grateful for the wonderful folks that I got to meet because of being with her.

Linda Benedict—To live so well one becomes an institution.... Is to have lived larger than one's self. So many were blessed by knowing her and her gifts.

Melissa Taylor—Is there a way we could come together to honor her and support each other? To share our mom and baby stories of healing and love?

Beth Bailey Barbeau—Such a loss for mothers and babies and all of us, so glad you got to experience her magic!

Rita Benn—Feeling sad that a pillar of our Ann Arbor holistic community who gave so generously of herself to educate and heal others, has passed. Humble, passionate, and larger than life, Linda Diane Feldt shared her incredible gifts with kindness, authenticity and integrity. Her passing marks the end of an era of our pioneer healers. We will miss you.

Photo by Rachael Waring

Jessica Webster Sendra—I've just learned that my friend Linda Diane Feldt has died. We met when she was writing a wonderful column about foraging, or wildcrafting as she called it, for the paper. She was quirky, but/and if you were paying attention you could learn so much about what really matters in life. And what is that? It's kindness. Generosity. Love. I'll miss her a lot.

Healers of Ann Arbor

Mindful Awakenings with Julie Woodward

Julie Woodward

By Laura K. Cowan

Through the pandemic, many people have reached out to healers and wellness teachers for self-care techniques and help through crisis. One such teacher, Julie Woodward of Mindful Awakenings, seemingly does it all. She teaches yoga for resilience, mindfulness meditation, and leads nature immersion hikes that help us all re-anchor ourselves in the present moment and recharge through times of stress.

How do you know which self-care and healing modalities are right for you at this time? I sat down with Woodward to talk about her newest class, which combines several of the techniques she teaches for relaxation and self-care. This new class is called Embodied Resilience in Uncertain Times: A Mindful Yoga Practice & Discussion. The class is eight weeks long, and is part yoga practice, part mindfulness class (with two individual coaching sessions included), and part support group. Think you might need some extra support to get through the late stages of the pandemic? Here's what it's like inside this new mindfulness coaching class offered by Mindful Awakenings.

Laura Cowan: How did you come to teach this class?

Julie Woodward: In the beginning of the pandemic, I had been teaching yoga and mindfulness for resilience, which provides mindfulness tools for grounding and self-compassion. During the pandemic, that class became virtual. I could see my experiences and students were changing in a dramatic way. Students wanted to be with the group. I saw them asking, "How can I live through this?" "How can I be my best self?" Our survival as a species lay in finding new tools. Buddhist scholar and ecopsychologist Joanna Macy's *The Work That Reconnects* covers some of these topics: how do we handle times of crisis? How do we consider the possibility of creating a more sustainable future? People were in trauma and shock, and a regular class wasn't sufficient. I wanted to provide a format for addressing isolation, fear, shock, powerlessness, as well as stress that was becoming chronic, feelings of being overwhelmed, trauma, addiction, death or illness of loved ones, and job loss. How do we manage this?

During the pandemic, that class became virtual. I could see my experiences and students were changing in a dramatic way.

Laura Cowan: That's a lot to teach in one class. How does it come together?

Julie Woodward: I taught movement, breathing, and meditation, then added reflection questions at the end. I invited people to talk about what they were going through: what did you find most calming last week? An open-ended question invites discussion.

Laura Cowan: So, tell us what a class with you is like.

Julie Woodward: The workshop I'm currently running combines class time and individual coaching. In the first and second class sessions, I teach mindfulness of body, grounding, and breathing to be more present. Then we discuss what makes it hard to be present. In the fourth class session, we cover how to begin again when we get off track. After that we cover mindfulness-based stress reduction, including emphasizing that we are not our thoughts. Then we cultivate compassion, gratitude, and opening to larger meaning in our experiences. Each class has a specific practice of yoga, yoga breathing, and mindfulness tools incorporated into it.

Laura Cowan: It sounds like the social aspect became valuable to students during the pandemic.

Julie Woodward: I teach ways to soothe stress through social connection in these classes and how to relate to ourselves in a more compassionate way with a larger perspective. We have conscious discussion of topics with guidelines for discussing from the heart and listening to respond without judgement or advice. We all know we're social animals, and we've had a lot of isolation. This is a deliberate reintroduction of connection.

When we connect with each other, something magical happens that allows us to see things with new eyes and find ideas we wouldn't discover on our own.

We cultivate compassion, gratitude, and opening to larger meaning in our experiences.

Laura Cowan: How do you manage your own stress in the middle of facilitating these classes during such a hard year?

Julie Woodward: I've been facilitating groups of people dealing with big life changes for about 20 years. I was a medical social worker and worked with people who had lung disease, so I learned to do movement and breathing practices that helped calm people.

I don't teach *at* people. I welcome people into the space and invite them to engage and bring themselves into the space with this safe structure for dialogue. We listen with heart, speak from the heart. We might ask, "What do you find most important to you right now?" When the class is structured like that, people are invited to tap into their best resources. People bring their greatest wisdom, and the group moves together and shifts perspective.

Laura Cowan: With all the difficult changes people are facing right now, what do you do if people show up with a major trauma that needs more support than the group can offer?

Julie Woodward: People show up with trauma they may not have articulated before, and there's a way of holding the class that creates a safe container and gives people permission to be as they are and not follow instructions if it doesn't feel comfortable. The first phase is to stabilize the nervous system in yoga. Most students I've met with privately before, too, so I know what they're dealing with. The beginning of a class session allows mind-body meditation to connect with a warm centered space. The feeling is of lovely supportive holding. It flows naturally. I know my students and care for them a lot. They tend to sign up for sessions year after year. When I'm coming into a class, it's like being with a family I care about.

"I teach ways to soothe stress through social connection in these classes and how to relate to ourselves in a more compassionate way with a larger perspective."
—Julie Woodward

Laura Cowan: How can people know if this is the right class for them?

Julie Woodward: All people who feel called to create something, to give something, would fit in this class. It tends to attract people who already have some self-care practice. If you want to feel better and be more resilient through current events, process emotions and the ramifications of what's happening, this is a great class for you. Also, if you want to generate a creative process for creative projects, this can help. Providers and caregivers might find respite here. Most students are mental health providers, authors, and engineers.

Julie Woodward is a yoga and meditation teacher and holistic health coach in Ann Arbor, Michigan, with a passion for the healing power of nature. She is co-founder of the Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness. Woodward draws on over 30 years of experience, study, and training in neuroscience, clinical social work, yoga, and meditation to support people in creating the life they envision for themselves. Woodward's integrative approach utilizes embodied mindfulness practices in individual coaching sessions, mindful yoga classes, mindful nature hikes, and workshops to help people connect to all of life. Learn more about current class offerings at juliewoodwardmsw.com.

Faith and Doubt

By Brian O'Donnell

I was recently asked to speak at an event regarding the spiritual life. Several weeks prior to the event, I sat down to collect my thoughts and come up with a topic. Nothing came to me. I felt barren of ideas and inspiration. I tried to *will* myself to be inspiring. Of course, this didn't work. I next grabbed books from my library regarding spirituality and began to cram. Some of what I ingested was momentarily inspiring, yet when I put the books down, I lost my excitement. I began to panic when I realized I was supposed to be spiritually uplifting in less than a week and I was so lost. My next strategy was to sleep (a lot)!

> It finally dawned on me, after going around the infamous vicious circles, that I could speak about the exact predicament I was in.

It finally dawned on me, after going around the infamous vicious circles, that I could speak about the exact predicament I was in. My topic could be about doubt, lost faith, as an aspect of the spiritual journey. By accepting this my flame was re-ignited.

So, what follows are some ideas that I shared with the folks who attended my talk.

To be on a spiritual path means being confronted by faithlessness, being lost in the dark, being besieged by doubt. An authentic spiritual discipline can accelerate the encounter with these forces and experiences. Prayer and meditation often bring to the surface buried and banished fears and pockets of misgiving.

As I was meditating on this aspect of my (our) journey, a series of phrases kept coming to me. Have faith in your doubts have doubts in your faith; have doubts in your doubts; have faith in your faith.

I want to discuss each of these in turn.

Have Faith in Your Doubts

What do I mean by having faith in your doubts? What I mean is to listen, to pay attention, to honor, to serve the voice of doubt. This voice can be the voice of discernment. It can be the tool of a sharpened and mature intellect. It can be the voice that says the emperor has no clothes. Doubts can arise from the realms of intuition or the accumulated wisdom of life experience. Doubt can be just plain common sense asking the obvious question. I shudder to think of some of the "spiritual" detours I took that would have been quickly remedied if I'd listened to my doubt. Polish the jewel of doubt and let it glisten and light the way.

> What I mean is to listen, to pay attention, to honor, to serve the voice of doubt. This voice can be the voice of discernment.

Have Doubts in Your Faith

What about having doubts in our faith? Isn't faith what we are building in our spiritual practice? Much of what we call faith rests on a shaky foundation. It can be a function of wishful thinking, laziness, or ignorance. It can be a blind belief. This kind of faith comes from the child consciousness in us that doesn't want to take responsibility for the life we've created. It doesn't want to see how we are constantly creating our life circumstances. It comes from the child consciousness in us that wants an external God to make it all right for us—like our parents didn't. It comes from the child that yearns for the image of heaven that was portrayed to us when little. A seemingly orderly, bland, and "perfect" state.

> Ill-placed faith tries to rise above and deny the terror of existence.

Ill-placed faith tries to rise above and deny the terror of existence. It resists facing that we are going to die—that we are dying. This child-faith looks the other way from the realities of war, cancer, aching poverty, horrific cruelty, and climate change. Such faith candy coats life with a superimposed confection that tries to banish terror, uncertainty, and the ambiguities of life.

This kind of faith requires doubt, penetrating, wise, courageous doubt.

This kind of doubt is what makes us grownups, not kids who are naively believing in an updated fairy tale with religious overlays. It is the mature discernment of the individual who is willing to question. Who is willing to make up his/her own mind (literally).

Have Doubts in Your Doubts

If doubt is so valuable, why do I suggest to doubt doubt?

Any truth can be used to serve truth or the will of the ego. As I mentioned, doubt can be used to facilitate our growing up. It can make us independent thinkers. It can tear down faulty edifices erected to protect us from the vicissitudes of life.

But doubt can also protect us from ever taking a leap into unknown territory. Doubt can become the minion of fear. It can seduce us away from risk—from dying into greater life. It can be the tool of the imperial ego. We can cling to the "solidity" of reason when the movement of spirit calls us. All of us have had the experience of crossing a stream and needing to jump from rock to rock. The voice of doubt can protect us from true danger, yet it also can freeze us on the first rock where we stay stuck and petrified. It points out all the negative possibilities and outcomes. This same voice often visits us on our spiritual journey as we are about to make a leap.

There can be a hidden stake in doubting. There can be wishful thinking here as well. If there is no meaning to life, no larger purpose, if life ends at our death than this can allow us to avoid facing the consequences of what lives deep in us. To doubt a larger orchestration and unfolding can provide us the "out" from doing the hard work of looking deep inside to purify and cleanse what is dark and opposed to life.

Have Faith in Your Faith

What does it mean to have faith in faith?

When we have honored our real doubts, which means confronting our destinies, and when we have challenged our ill placed doubt (that is the servant of fear and the little ego that doesn't want to lose control), then we can have faith in faith.

Only then can we step toward the Greater Mystery of life undefended, with courage, integrity, and love. We can risk discovering that we are not cosmically alone. We can discover that we are loved, and in fact, are Love. We can experience that we are a part of joyous choreography.

Touching this kind of faith allows us to meet more doubt which then allows us to expand our faith in an ever-increasing benign circle.

This brings me to the role of spiritual practice in regard to faith and doubt. I see spiritual practice as the deepening of faith through meeting doubt. It is the active summoning of doubt, both in its ill-advised type and the real existential doubt. It is the undefended opening to the lostness, the darkness, the places of separation that exist in us, that we are put here to meet and transform.

Rumi has a great line that sums up this attitude quite well. "The elixir is hidden in the poison, come to the poison and come, return to the root of the root of your own Self." We need to put our doubt in the chalice of our practice and drink of it fully to eventually savor the essence that is basic to the brew.

> As long as we are separate from the Divine Source we will be challenged by doubt.

Doubt is co-existent with separation. As long as we are separate from the Divine Source we will be challenged by doubt. So, doubt isn't the issue, it's not whether we have it or not, it's *how* we meet it.

Spiritual practice can cultivate the attitude of not being victimized by doubt but using it as the portal to find a deeper connection to faith.

"Faith is such a simple thing. It can't talk, but only sing. It can't reason but can dance. Take a chance. Take a chance. Life is full of ways to go. Sun, rain, wind, snow. All unknowingly we trace a geography of grace. From breath to breath and blink to blink, it's never quite the way we think." — Al Carmines

Brian O'Donnell is a psychologist in private practice and a Pathwork teacher. You can contact him at bodpath@aol.com. If you'd like to learn more about the Pathwork, which this article is derived from, you can visit the Pathwork website at greatlakespathwork.org.

YOGA COLUMN

Namaste, Katie...

Whether you're a seasoned yogi or getting ready to roll out your mat for the first time, here you'll find a variety of useful tips from local yoga instructor, Katie Hoener.

Namaste Katie,

During the Pandemic, I made the leap to become a yoga teacher! I am thrilled to explore teaching and have been excited to share my journey. I have struggled with explaining to my friends and family the essence of yoga beyond the quieting of the mind, when so many only see the physical practice. Do you have any tips?

Many thanks,

Tina, Chelsea

Tina,

Congratulations! Welcome to the realm of yoga teachers. It is both a beautiful and overwhelming experience. You are absolutely right in your feelings that so many in this country see yoga as entirely a physical (*asana*) practice. It takes time and patience to guide people into a deeper understanding if they are interested in learning.

One of the hearts of yoga is found in Yoga Sutra 1.12 which reflects that in order to participate in yoga we need practice, *abhyasa,* and non-attachment, *vairagya.* Yoga, in all its forms, with asana being one of the limbs, asks of us these two elements at its core. With these two key elements we are able to find that quiet peace that you describe, and we hope to teach this as instructors. Practice entails participating and practicing all the elements of the yogic path, yamas and niyamas (the ethical code), asana, pranayama (breathwork), pratyahara (sense withdrawal) dharana (concentration), dhyana (meditation), and samadhi (contemplation). Non-attachment is surrendering the outcome/results.

Even our desire to lead people to the essence of yoga has some trappings of results and outcomes. We want them to 'get it' to feel the way we do! (which is understandable). We can come into *abhyasa* and *vairagya* by offering our full practice of yoga whenever we get the chance and release the expectation of results. People will accept the parts that work for them, as we all hope to do. Enjoy the journey.

Namaste Katie,

I appreciate you addressing the extra sitting with alternative schedules that some of us are experiencing. Is there anything that may support both myself and my partner? I am sitting a great deal more, and my partner is spending more time than ever standing. As a result, we are both experiencing a great deal of stress on the low back. Is there a posture we can add into our evening routine?

Matt, Ypsilanti

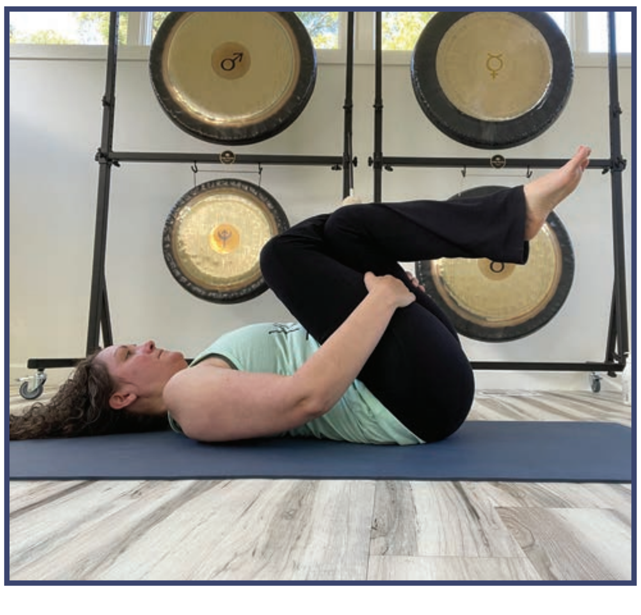
Hello Matt,

Wow are you on to something! Though not everyone has experienced a change in their routine, schedule, or work style, many have. These changes have a profound effect on the body. Last issue we discussed how we hold tension through the shoulders, and you've noted these sensations in your low back for you and your partner in different settings.

One posture that addresses tightness in the hips and low back is Gomukhasana or Cow Faced Pose. This posture can be performed seated or reclined for a slightly different experience. The variations also allow for different accessibility and opportunities to discover where we are holding tension in the body. If one version feels right, stick with it, otherwise, try the other version.

In the seated variation, we cross the legs over one another, the top foot can stay planted, or knee can rest relatively over the other knee (as pictured). On an inhale, elongate through the spine. As pictured, for some of us, this is all the release that we need, as this posture targets the piriformis muscle, at times, intensely. If able, take a forward fold with the upper body in way that feels right. This can be walking the hands forward with the spine long or folding forward with a bend in the spine.

To come into the reclined version, lay on your back and let the legs float into the air. Cross one leg in front of the other and allow the legs to bend in toward the torso, to whatever degree feels good. The knees are near one another as they move toward the body. The feet can rest on a prop, they can travel up and relax, or they can swing out away from the body. If we rotate from the hips, we can take the feet in the hands and give them a little squeeze or massage. Feel free to spend more time on one side than the other, and to honor where you are from one moment to the next. Breathe deeply into the posture to see what feels right.



Reclined Gomukhasana

Namaste Katie,

Of late I have really struggled with my meditation practice. As someone who has practiced meditation for quite some time, I am at a little bit of a loss as to what to try. A friend suggested trying some chanting to ease back into it. Do you have any thoughts on that?

Mary, Ann Arbor

Dear Mary,

You are not alone in the challenges presented by stillness in the current environment. With social unrest, a pandemic, and too many global events to keep track of, finding that quiet of the mind can take effort and at times a change in approach. As in our discussion with Tina (above), giving some level of vairagya to all aspects of our practice can help us move forward.

Mantra, or chanting, is a wonderful, and powerful way to change course and see if it offers you some stillness. According to our Yoga Sutras of Pantanjali 1.27 OM is the sacred sound, and one of the most impactful mantras. The commentary of Swami Satchidananda states OM contains all the vibrations, all the sounds of the universe, and is infinite. "To listen to that sound, you have to keep your mind quiet, stop the thinking process and dive within." (*The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, Translation and Commentary by Sri Swami Satchidanananda.)*

The vibrations created by mantra have a soothing way of keeping the mind from leaping from topic to topic, and from being drawn away from the stillness. There are so many mantras, and this style of meditation is called japa meditation, the repetition of sounds, words, or song in an effort to tame that monkey mind. Though OM is the universal mantra according to the Sutras, find a mantra that you feel comfortable with, or if you are in a place to encounter a guru of significant yoga lineage, one can be blessed upon you. I often engage in japa meditation for a variety of reasons and applaud your friend for bringing it to your attention. If it works for you, fantastic, if it is not sitting well with you, there are other meditation practices, some of which we have described in this column. Try things out. Let them go if they do not work well for you!

Katie Hoener is a RYT 500, receiving her 200 and 500 hour trainings. She is also a Licensed Master Social Worker and a partner at Verapose Yoga in Dexter (veraposeyoga.com). Please send your own yoga questions to katie@veraposeyoga.com.

Resources for Conscious Living

Acupuncture

Dr. Kong Acupuncture and Fertility Center

Sleep Better. Reduce Stress.
Eliminate Pain.

4343 Concourse Drive, Suite #100, Ann Arbor
734.358.3379
acupuncture-annarbor.com

調和 Emanuele
Acupuncture Center

Rosanne Emanuele
734-302-7300
2350 Washtenaw, Suite 10
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Emanueleacupuncture.com
23 Years Experience

ASIAN HEALING
TRADITIONS

Henry Buchtel, MMed (China), RAc (MI)
Acupuncture . Chinese Herbology

henry@asianhealingtraditions.com | 734.707.8890
3200 w liberty | suite C6 | ann arbor, mi 48103
www.AsianHealingTraditions.com

PACIFIC ACUPUNCTURE
HERBAL MEDICINE & FERTILITY
Dr. Song Qing (Simon) Xue
DAOM, Dipl. O.M (NCCAOM)®, LA.c

Cosmetic Acupuncture
and Micro & Nano Needling

4770 Jackson Road, Suite 101, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734.800.4118 | PacificAcupuntureCenter.com
Facebook: @Pacificacupuntureaa - Yelp: Simon Xue, LA.c

Animal Communication

JUDY LIU RAMSEY
CONSULTANT & PRACTITIONER

Heart To Heart

SHAMANIC HEALING • ANIMAL COMMUNICATION
CLASSES • CEREMONY • CONSULTATIONS

ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com • https://JudyRamsey.net

Astrology/Chart Services

NORTHERN SKY AND BEYOND, LLC
Astrology with Alice

Charts • Readings • Star DNA

www.northernskyandbeyond.com
info@northernskyandbeyond.com
734.892.8809

Ayurveda

Join our State of MI-Licensed Certificate Program in Ayurveda

Become an Ayurvedic Health Consultant!
Visit our Website for Program Details!

BODHANANDA VEDIC INSTITUTE
SCHOOL OF AYURVEDA
The Sambodh Society, Inc., 6363 N. 24th St., Kalamazoo, MI 49004
www.AyurvedaMichigan.org
Request our Catalog: BVI.Ayurveda.MI@gmail.com

Birth

Melisa Schuster, LMSW
psychotherapy for the childbearing years

- prenatal and postpartum depression
- traumatic birth
- childbearing losses
- parenting and child guidance

734-302-0033 • www.melisaschuster.com
500 Little Lake Drive, #300 • Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Bodywork/Bodymind Therapy

Bodhi Body

Beth's Cranial Sacral Therapy & Deep Tissue Massage Therapy
European Essentials Locally Made
Healing Salve, Creams, Oils, Lip Balms & Sprays

734.707.3706 | Beth.Dulka@outlook.com

KATE ROOS, MAAT, ATR
Offering a Trauma Informed
Yoga and Art Therapy Practice
For Teens and Adults
Opening April 2022

www.kate-roos.com 734-417-8838

Resources for Conscious Living

Bodywork/Bodymind Therapy

Rob Meyer-Kukan, LMT
Bodywork: massage, reiki, craniosacral,
reflexology, sound therapy, &
natural health consultations

7 NOTES NATURAL HEALTH
HEAR, SEE, AND FEEL TRUE WELLNESS
7notesnaturalhealth. com
248-962-5475 rob@robmeyerkukan.com
3830 Packard Road Suite 120 Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108

www.naturopathicschoolofannarbor.net

Student Intern Massage Clinic
$40.00 & $63.00 for sessions.
By Appointment: 734-769-7794
3684 W. LIBERTY RD at the Liberty Office Center

Ann Arbor School of Massage
Herbal and Natural Medicine

Ginger Chase LMT
Collaborative
Therapeutic
Massage

Ann Arbor, MI

GingerChaseMassages.com
Call/Text: 734.660.5748 Chase.Ginger@Gmail.com

Denise Held, RN
CERTIFIED RELEXOLOGIST • REFLEXOLO-CHI™

Natural Healing Center
2002 Hogback Rd. Suite 14
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
734-649-2891 (C)

denisebheld@gmail.com
www.a2reflexology.com

Therapeutic Foot Massage
www.facebook.com/A2Reflexology

> *“Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home.”*
>
> — Edith Sitwell

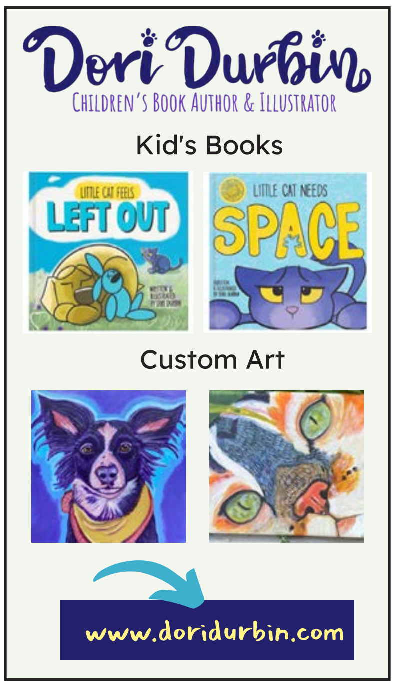
Community Farms

COMMUNITY
FARM
of Ann Arbor

resilient
community
relationships

wisdom.communityfarmofaa.org

Crafters/Artists/Authors


Dori Durbin
CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR
Kid's Books
Custom Art
www.doridurbin.com

a
mess
of
photos

mary getz
artist & printmaker

amessofphotosart@gmail.com
amessofphotosart.com
instagram.com/a.mess.of.photos/

Art & Element
https://www.artandelement.com

Resources for Conscious Living

Crafters/Artists/Authors

:POP!:
designs

Balloon art
for every
occasion!

www.popdesignsandcreations.com

Evangeline's Emporium

High Quality Epoxy Jewelry, gifts & More
Coupon Codes
10% off code 36PMX95
Free shipping first order LJDA2UV
evangelinesemporium.shop

Elder Law

Law for the Second Half of Life

ELIZABETH W. HURWITZ
Hurwitz Law Offices PLLC

2035 Hogback Rd. Suite 211
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
(734) 657-0835
Admitted in NYS & MI

Energy Healing

sacred prayer
blended with
reiki, eft, and
vibrational sound
therapy creating
a unique healing
experience

734–604–6938

danielle@iamwellreiki.com
www.iamwellreiki.com

WONDER
TWINNING
WHERE FAITH MEETS
ENERGY HEALING

Rev. Vicky Lovell
and
Danielle Groth, CRMT

Hindu philosophy/Teachings

The Sambodh Center for Human Excellence
ADVAITA VEDANTA • MEDITATION • THE FOREST OF ENLIGHTENMENT

An ashram sharing the teaching tradition of
Advaita Vedanta and meditation under the
leadership of Swami Bodhananda Sarasvati

sambodh.us
facebook.com/SambodhSociety

6363 N 24th St, Kalamazoo, MI 49004 · (269) 492-0544

Holistic Health

CHÉRIE ANN McMULLEN
Holistic Health Practitioner

Nutritional Consultations
Vitamins/Herbs/Homeopathy

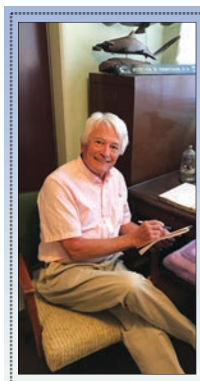
734-355-5369
2223Cherieann@gmail.com

Back to Basics Holistic Health
Restoring health naturally, one body at a time.

Services offered include:
Nutrition Counseling
Sauna
Ionic Footbath
Evox
And many others!

Juli Johnson N.D.
125 West Lake Street
South Lyon, MI 48178
(248) 921-0586
juli@back2basicshealth.com
back2basicshealth.com

Hypnotherapy



Hypnosis in Ann Arbor
Conrad J. Welsing, MA,CH

Do you want to understand more about hypnosis? Need a mental reset, conquer a fear that is holding you back or change an unwanted habit? In this two-session on-line class you will learn techniques to engage the mind, body and emotions. Check the website for dates and times.

www.conNEXTtext.com

LIZ CHEATHAM FORMAN
Quantum Healing
Hypnosis Technique
Practitioner, Level 2
Reiki Master

Past Life Regression
Direct Intuition Work
Energy Healing

Main Sreet, Ann Arbor

www.lizforman.me
hello@lizforman.me
@sunshine.brightly

Resources for Conscious Living

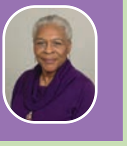
Intuitive/Psychic

Guidance | Confirmation | Direction

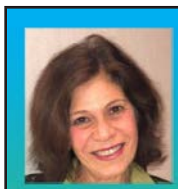
PRIVATE READINGS - GROUP EVENTS - GIFT CERTIFICATES

313-655-7694 READINGSWITHGAIL.COM

EMBERYG@YAHOO.COM



PSYCHIC/MEDIUM,
LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR, MA, LLPC



Nanci Rose Gerler

Psychic | Medium | Channel | Lightworker

Over 30 years of experience providing expert intuitive guidance & illuminating insight

Life Challenges: Past | Present | Future
Departed Loved Ones | Spirit Guides

Phone readings by appointment
734.707.5044
NanciRoseGerler.com

Divine Inspiration At Work

Align Divine Inspiration with concrete action to transform your personal life, career, or business.

Schedule a Reading:
DivineInspirationAtWork.com

Susan McGraw
Psychic Medium
Career & Business Strategist
734-415-4006

Life Coaching

NIA SPONGBERG
LIFE COACH

Let's get outside!
Walk & Talk
sessions available
year-round.

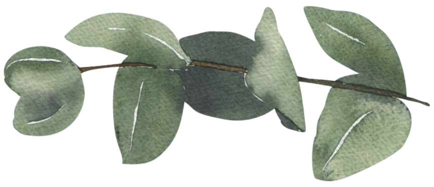
(734) 531-9024
www.niaspongberg.com

Jennifer Lee Stein, LLPC

Life Is Current
Counseling & Intuitive Coaching

lifeiscurrent.com
lifeiscurrent@gmail.com
734-707-7766

IFS · Spirituality · Career · Relationships



Medical Cannabis Certification

TRUE HEALING CENTER

MMMP Certification Clinic

Phone: (734) 519-5038 Fax: (734) 519-5707

Email: THCAnnArbor@gmail.com
2500 Packard Street, Suite 107
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
www.THCAnnArbor.com

Organic Gardening

NEW EARTH HOME AND GARDEN

New Year, New Life,
New Gardens!

Rosina Newton
Organic Gardening Coach
Landscape Designer
Public Speaker

Rosina@NewEarthHomeAndGarden.com
NewEarthHomeAndGarden.com
512-638-3401

Psychotherapy/Trauma Therapy

ANN ARBOR WALK AND TALK THERAPY

Fran Cowen Adler, LMSW

An experienced therapist's novel approach to counseling, for teens and adults

Let's walk and talk!

For information and
to make an appointment:
734-429-2076
a2walktalk@gmail.com

Stephen L. Rassi, PhD, LMSW, MA
Clinical Social Worker

CBT for Anxiety; TIR for PTSD and Trauma Concerns
Skills for Increased Focus and Concentration
Counseling for Trans* and Gender-Diverse Clients

mercury@umich.edu • 734.945.9100

Chrysalis Facilitation and Counseling Services, LLC
Located in the Center for Sacred Living
210 Little Lake Dr., Suite 7 Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Transitions LLC

Helping you successfully navigate the changes you encounter as you go through life.

Specializing in:
EMDR
Abuse and trauma issues
Adjustments to changes in health
Anticipatory and ongoing grief work

Linda S. Bender, ACSW, LMSW
734.395.2285 LindaBenderTransitions@gmail.com
4488 Jackson Road #4, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
LindaBenderTransitions.com

Resources for Conscious Living

Physical Therapy

Healing Hands
Physical Therapy
58 Parkland Plaza, Ste. 100
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734-222-8515
www.PhysicalTherapyAnnArbor.com

Reiki

REIKI
THE USUI SYSTEM OF REIKI HEALING
For Body, Mind & Spirit
CLASSES & INDIVIDUAL TREATMENTS
Suzy Wienckowski, Reiki Master
Reiki Alliance Member
734.476.7958
SuzyReiki@aol.com

Peaceful Heart Services, LLC
DLCurry@hotmail.com
517-303-3166
Peacefulheart.biz
Lori Curry
Intuitive Psychic & Tarot Card Reader
Reiki Master
End of Life Doula

Sacred Sexuality

Sacred Sexuality
with **Leslie Blackburn**
now seeing clients in Ann Arbor!
Educator, Speaker, Radio Show Host
313.269.6719
www.LeslieBlackburn.com
Leslie@LeslieBlackburn.com

Shops

Divine Sanctuary
1524 Horton Rd.
Jackson, Michigan 49203
517-247-8400
Metaphysical Supplies
mydivinesanctuary.com

Spiritual Healing

Eve Wilson Bridge to Wholeness
- ♥ Remarkable Spiritual Healing
- ♥ Healing & Ascension classes
- ♥ Award-Winning Blog
- ♥ Book – "Riding the Wave of Change"

The Weekly Word for Healing & Ascension
www.spiritualhealers.com • 734-780-7635

Sustainable Building Supplies

Bgreen Inc.
Sustainable, Non-Toxic Building Supplies

flooring, countertops, tiles, paint, dualflush toilets, solar, wood burning stoves, cleaning supplies and much more

2111 Packard Street,Suite A
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
phone: (734) 214-3000
www.BgreenToday.com

Theater Groups

NTG
NEIGHBORHOOD THEATRE GROUP
www.NTGYpsi.org
info@ntgypsi.org #NTGYpsi

Wool Products – Fiber Farm

— Michigan Merinos —
Happy Goat Lucky Ewe Fiber Farm

Buy a whole fleece on shearing day,
March 19, 2022 — from 10-12.

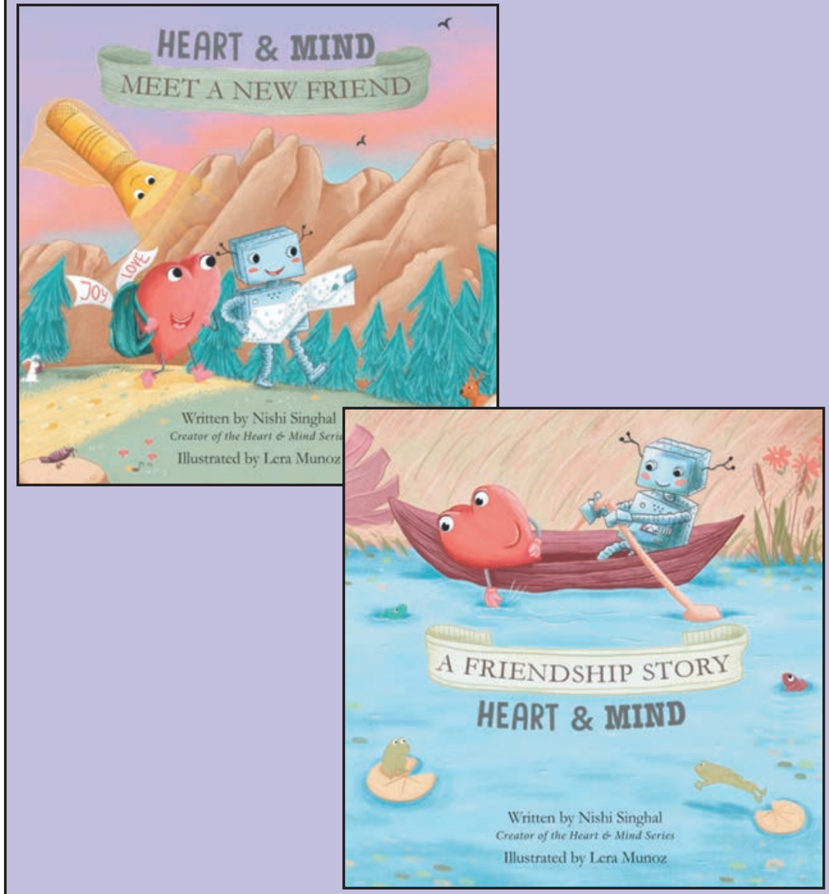
MichiganMerinos.com
Facebook @HappyGoatLuckyEwe

Our advertisers appreciate your patronage

WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY

By Lynda Gronlund

This ongoing column features upcoming events within Ann Arbor/Washtenaw County and surrounding areas' Body/Mind/Spirit communities, new (during the past year or two) practitioners and holistic businesses, new books written by local/regional authors, new classes, as well as new offerings by established practitioners and holistic businesses.


HEART & MIND
MEET A NEW FRIEND
JOY
LOVE
Written by Nishi Singhal
Creator of the Heart & Mind Series
Illustrated by Lera Munoz
A FRIENDSHIP STORY
HEART & MIND
Written by Nishi Singhal
Creator of the Heart & Mind Series
Illustrated by Lera Munoz

Photos by Sapan Ahuja Studio

Photos by Brandon Philips

Nishi Singhal, a children's book author, yoga teacher, and nonprofit director who lives in Ann Arbor, created an online space called Joy Parade during the pandemic, as a place for kids and adults to learn and remember that "in any and every moment, presence and joy exists."

Read more on page 33

New Offerings by Established Businesses and Practitioners

The Enlightened Soul Center has moved to a new, larger, standalone building on Carpenter Road in Ann Arbor.

Enlightened Soul Center & Shop for the holistic and intuitive arts

The former Lotus Center building is still owned by acupuncturist Brodie Burris, who has decided to downsize his acupuncture practice and lease the building. Originally opened in March of 2016, the Center was previously located in an office park on Packard which was not visible from the street and confusing to find. The new space is twice as large, easy to see from the road, and is offering expanded services.

Owner Amy Garber explained that the Center has expanded its metaphysical store space and can offer more items, and now has six reading rooms instead of the original two. Previously open by appointment and during events only, the Center will offer open hours Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 7:00 PM for shopping, and there are plans to have tarot, oracle, and other types of readers and energy healers on site for most of those hours, for walk-in and scheduled appointments. There is a continuing roster of classes, workshops, and groups as well. Likeminded practitioners can also rent space for events and classes, which the Center will promote to its clients and community.

Since the pandemic, Garber's Enlightened Soul Expos–large psychic fairs held approximately twice per year–have been on hold. The new space, she said, will host mini psychic fairs twice monthly, mostly on the first and third Saturdays unless there is a holiday or other conflict. The Expos will resume at some point, she said, but she does not feel ready to draw so many people together yet, and these events are a great way to work with readers, vendors, and clients in a smaller format. She said they can host around thirteen readers and healers, and a few vendors. In the spring and summer once the weather warms up, she will expand these events into the parking lot where more vendors and practitioners can use tables and tents to increase the available space.

Garber made the move in October of 2021, with the first open event held on October 30 after two weeks of unpacking and painting. The Center is holding a Grand Opening event on December 4th.

The new Enlightened Soul Center is located at 2711 Carpenter Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48108. More information is online at enlightenedsoulcenter.com. Amy Garber can be reached by email at amy@enlightenedsoulcenter.com or by phone at (734) 358-0218.

Leslie McGraw is an Ypsilanti-based marketing strategist, social media expert, poet, writer and training expert who works with creatives, individuals, businesses, and nonprofit organizations who have a positive impact on the community.

She started Les Go Social in 2012, and her business has gone through a number of changes over the years.

McGraw is the great grand-niece of Elbert Williams, a voting rights activist and NAACP member who was kidnapped and brutally murdered by prominent white members of his community in Tennessee in 1940. The family knew the story, but in 2015 a retired cold-case investigator sent McGraw documents about the case that confirmed what she had been told – that Williams was the first voting rights martyr. McGraw was visiting Tennessee for the first time on the 75th anniversary of his death to commemorate him with a historic marker. Her grandmother was afraid for her safety even after so much time had passed.

McGraw said that learning about and telling the story of Elbert Williams inspired her to bring her separate selves–her business self, her personal self, her activist self, her poet self– together, and allow things to flow more naturally. She said the African idea of Sankofa – "to go back and fetch what has been lost and bring it forward into the present" informs the choices she makes in her business and other callings today. The chaos and challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic have only strengthened this desire to live and work in an authentic, intentional, integrated way. She said this has allowed her to be more effective and successful than ever before. She believes that Elbert Williams, and those like him, did what they did in order to give their descendants the ability to live the way they do.

In addition to her business, McGraw works for Protectors of Equality in Government. In her business, she seeks out and works with people and organizations whose visions she believes in. She helps people develop holistic marketing strategies, starting with a discovery call to make sure it's a right fit, and then completing an online presence and social media audit, and collaborating with the client to find "a rhythm that makes sense for your business." She also offers email marketing and has an extensive network of contacts she can refer to for any marketing needs that are not in her own areas of specialty.

Leslie McGraw's websites are lesliemcgraw.com and lesgoforit.com. She can be reached through the contact pages of either site.

Continued on page 33

We will be selling or closing the bricks-and-mortar Crazy Wisdom Bookstore on the eve of its 40th anniversary, and after a third of a century of our owning it – on the day after Valentine's Day 2022.

Meanwhile, we'll continue to expand The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal (print and online), which reaches 20,000 readers each issue, and enhance our digital presence with the Crazy Wisdom Biweekly Ezine, which started just 18 months ago during the pandemic, and is now reaching 8,000 readers a month.

We will also be reinvigorating our crazywisdom.net, crazywisdomjournal.com, shopcrazywisdom.com and AnnArborHolistic.com websites.

There is a relentlessness to a retail business – open 7 days a week, 360 days a year, and to the hamster-wheel aspect of staffing and management issues. Our own family has grown up, and we're in our 60's, and we're ready to look out upon a new and different horizon. The bookstore had a very profitable year (due to having closed the tea room at the onset of the pandemic), and that's not a bad way to go out!

We know that Crazy Wisdom has been a unique destination and special bookstore in our region, and treasured by its friends and customers. We and our longtime managers and staff, past and present, have so much gratitude for having had the privilege over these decades to serve people in our region who are searching in their lives — spiritually, psychologically, holistically, and in terms of sustainable and conscious living. We intend for Crazy Wisdom to continue to be a beacon of consciousness in the region, though perhaps not in the form of a bricks-and-mortar retail business.

We own our lovely, renovated Main Street building, without debt, and it is not for sale. We will be taking some months to decide how to best use that building, and whether to continue a variety of consciousness-related projects from that base. So, in a sense, Crazy Wisdom's bookstore operation will go "on sabbatical" as we consider our next steps. At the same time, we invite and encourage others with a vision, younger than ourselves, to step into the role of providing a safe haven for seekers and countercultural imaginings.

We welcome any serious inquiries into buying the bookstore, and renting the space, or related ideas. Please email us at: billz@crazywisdom.net

With deep gratitude,
Bill Zirinsky and Ruth Schekter
Longtime owners of Crazy Wisdom

Visit the Crazy Wisdom Journal Website & Blog

Elisabeth Sotobeer
on yoga & moving meditations

Nishi Singhal
on children & mindfulness

Tara Beth
on the divine feminine

Look for these guest bloggers (& more!) beginning in January.

Jeri Kay Thomas
on opening a bookstore during pandemic times

Christina Wall
on being an end-of-life doula

Leslie Blackburn
on freeing yourself from ancestral bias

WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY

Continued from page 31

Mystic Creations held a Grand opening for its Ypsilanti shop on October 31, 2021.

Owner, Lyanna Bennett, is an intuitive life coach who uses her empathic and clairvoyant gifts, along with tarot cards and other divination tools, to help people take positive steps in their lives. Around two years ago, she began to make reading her full-time work, and gathered other readers under the Mystic Creations business, offering readings online, over the phone, and in person. It became her dream, along with the others she worked with, to create a shop they could work from. "It was kind of a pipe dream," said Bennet, but when she bought her house in Ypsilanti, she decided to follow through and bring the vision into reality.

She said that she believes she was divinely guided, because as soon as she committed to the idea, "everything fell into place." The first piece of furniture she purchased for the shop, a curio cabinet she found at an estate sale, had eight other people vying for it, but it ultimately went to her. She took this as a sign that she was on the right path, and every other step she took went just as smoothly.

The shop sells a huge variety of items for use in magical pursuits: raw and tumbled crystals, bulk herbs, candles, incense, jewelry, books, teapots, brooms, swords and athames, dousing boards, crystal grids, wands, natural items like feathers, birch paper, sacred water from each of the great lakes and from several Upper Peninsula waterfalls, a few antiques, and more. Many items are handmade, such as the dousing boards from Ann Arbor-based maker the Urban Lumberjack. Bennett said, "When I see something magical, I bring it into the store." The Mystic Creations website has an online store with many of the shop's items available, as well.

The shop also has space for its own psychic readers, as well as space for rent to other practitioners. Clients can even book parties with Bennett or another reader coming to their location for Tarot, Oracle, or Tea Leaf readings. Of her own readings, Bennett said she is focused on "getting people step by step onto their most genuine and authentic life path," viewing what she does as a unique way of life coaching rather than simply divination.

Mystic Creations is located at 3025 North Prospect Road, Ypsilanti, MI 48198. The website is mysticcreations.online. Specials are run regularly through the shop's Facebook page at facebook.com/mysticcreations.online. Lyanna Bennett can be reached by phone at (734) 680-2707 or by email at mysticcreations.online@gmail.com.

In March of 2019, at the Stone Chalet in Ann Arbor, MoonSeed Movement Troupe's yearlong journey of dance, fellowship, and healing culminated in two sold-out performances.

The eight women involved had met weekly for a year for a "creative expedition," dancing, exploring ritual and performance art, and supporting one another in their personal challenges. The goal of the performance was to "encourage participants to deepen their understanding of the human archetypal themes that connect us all to one another," said Sonja Knightly one of the performers in MoonSeed. The entire project was documented by videographer Toko Shiiki Santos, who planned to make a documentary film about it. The women came from different creative backgrounds who came together through various connections. MoonSeed was the brainchild of Britten Daywell and Carla Samson, and they invited others they knew from previous projects and experiences to participate. Altogether six other women made the commitment: Sonja Knightly, Hilary Nichols, Megan Sims, Miriam Dowd Eller, Catherine Fritz, and Sybil Berry.

After the performances, several of the women continued to meet, but after the Covid-19 pandemic made it impossible to meet in person, that work came to a "sacred pause," said Samson. The documentary film has not yet come to full fruition. But Nichols, Samson, and Daywell said that the experience has planted seeds for other projects and ideas for those who participated, and continues to inform and inspire them and others. "We really grew over the year that we gathered," said Nichols. "We were women planting seeds of intention." She described it as a "sister circle," going into "a place of deep listening to what wants to come through." She described the women in the group as "very creative doers and makers." Daywell said, "We don't know what else will come of it. We were meeting and creating pieces, working through life and talking, and putting together a performance and documenting it."

Knightly said "MoonSeed Movement Troupe was an accelerator experience for me! I want to nurture that energy to continue blooming and blossoming into the world! The container of intentional creative sisterhood is rich and fertile!"

Today, the women are moving forward in a number of creative ways.

Carla Samson started on online business in 2019 called Femme Genius, which helps "bring women onto their stages," building their businesses and online presences. She also helps women "amplify their voices through singing and spoken word."

Miriam Dowd Eller and Britten Daywell are co-creators of a new Eco Wellness & Nature Sanctuary in Manchester, MI.

Megan Sims offers Nia classes in Ann Arbor as Me Again Dance Wellness.

Sims, Fritz, and Daywell are currently working on a creative movement piece together.

Nichols, a photographer, continues her creative photography business and is passionate about taking pictures that "reflect the true heart and spirit of women practitioners."

Berry founded The Moving Village, a nonprofit organization that serves under-resourced families and children through small events in Ypsilanti and at the Brighton Community Center, teaching dance, getting bikes to kids, and other projects.

Sonja Knightly is currently involved with the Champions for Change Leaders of Color program through the NEW (Nonprofit Enterprise at Work) Center in Ann Arbor.

Samson said that group members are open to other styles of collaboration with others inspired by their work, and they hope to be a resource for others who wish to bring their ideas into being.

An excerpt from the MoonSeed Movement Troupe documentary is at facebook.com/octoberbabiestoko/videos/10215631863843524. The group's Facebook page is at facebook.com/moonseedmovement. Carla Samson can be reached via email at iamcarlasamson@gmail.com and can put people in touch with other group members, as needed.

New Books by Area Authors

Nishi Singhal, a children's book author, yoga teacher, and nonprofit director who lives in Ann Arbor, created an online space called Joy Parade during the pandemic, as a place for kids and adults to learn and remember that "in any and every moment, presence and joy exists."

She said that "with some learned, practical strategies, we can all live a more balanced and easeful life."

Her most recent children's book, *Heart and Mind Meet a New Friend*, was released in August of 2020. This is part of a series in which Heart, Mind, and Awareness are actual characters. She said that her goal with this second book was to help children increase self-awareness, become more emotionally resilient, instill self-compassion, and attune to their feelings. In the last couple of years, she said, she has hosted several children's yoga workshops, which have demonstrated to her that kids are "craving this information." The books are aimed at helping children, she said, but also reminding and helping the parent or caregiver reading with the child to slow down and stop overthinking. "It's like mindfulness 101," she said.

During the pandemic, Singhal also became certified as an Inner Voice Facilitator, which she said allows her to help people "get still, and hear from their heart, intuition, soul, and/or higher self." She offers coaching with this methodology.

Through her website, blog, books, and coaching, Singhal works to help children and adults "live with presence & act with joy."

Nishi Singhal can be reached by email at nishi@joyparade.co. Her website is joyparade.co.

Continued on page 34

WHAT'S NEW IN THE COMMUNITY

Continued from page 33

Ann Arbor based psychotherapist and art therapist Sibel Ozer, LPC, BCPC, ATR-BC, has published her first book.

Stories of my Art: Contemplations of an artist, psychotherapist, and spiritual seeker was released in mid-December 2021 and will be available through Ozer's website and some local bookstores. She said that the book was about two years in the making and is largely made up of a compilation of blog entries written over a six-year period for the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* blogsite. Each story in the book is accompanied by an image of one of Ozer's paintings. Some of these paintings have been shown previously at a St. Joseph Health System exhibit entitled "Art Heals," and some have been part of her blog entries.

Ozer said that the book opens with some biographical pieces, talking about how she came to art therapy. Others are stories of art therapy, containing "nuggets of wisdom" she has picked up and shared with clients over the years. Through the book, she hopes that these ideas can reach a larger audience than just the clients she works with one-on-one. She discusses topics like who we are, how we behave, the nature of the mind, mindfulness (which she noted is good for everyone), and the nature of feelings, mind, and thoughts. She explores some of these concepts through goddess archetypes, which are a frequent theme in her art. The writing is conversational, she said, and noted that "blogging was a good fit for me," because she enjoys writing in this style and making the exploration of the psyche accessible to everyone.

Sibel Ozer's website is sibelozer.com. She can be reached by email at fireflyarttherapy@gmail.com or by phone at (303) 905-1109.

New Classes

Ann Arbor-based Larissa Czuchnowsky and Dr. Matt Helm, both coaches and Accelerated Evolution practitioners, have collaborated to create a new online course titled Love Unleashed, Be the Lover They Crave in the Relationship You Desire.

The course covers four pillars: self-love, self-mastery, conscious communication, and awakened sexuality. These, said Dr. Helm, result in "evolutionary awakened relationships; a new paradigm." The course is for singles as well as for people already in romantic relationships and involves deep work on the self to "align with who you authentically are… [and become your] turned-on, vibrant, empowered self," said Czuchnowsky, which in turn makes all relationships better and helps people to attract the soulmate level relationship they are looking for.

The course includes a detailed workbook and "rich, deep, experiential modules," said Helm. Ultimately, as the pandemic continues to improve, Helm and Czuchnowsky will offer in-person weekend events they believe will help people create dramatic shifts and personal transformations.

Czuchnowsky has been coaching for about two years; Dr. Helm has been a coach and therapist for five. Each works with clients one-on-one in addition to this course work. They are designing several more courses for the future: one for women, one for men, one about boundaries, and one about the Erotic Blueprint Types methodology created by one of Dr. Helm's mentors–Miss Jaiya from the Netflix series Sex Love & Goop, which helps people recognize their erotic type, needs, turn-ons, and things to avoid.

For more information on the course, Dr. Matt Helm can be contacted through his website, matthelmcoaching.com. Larissa Czuchnowsky's website is thewisdomheartcoaching.com and she can be contacted by email at wisdomheartcoaching@gmail.com or by phone at (734) 657-1210.

New Practitioners and Businesses

Christina Wall is a new End-of-Life Doula based in Ann Arbor, having received her certification and training with Merilynne Rush in 2020.

She has been a hospice volunteer since 2018. Inspired to this work by the difficult deaths of her parents in 2018 and 2021, both of whom went through hospice, she found that she was more comfortable dealing with death than she thought she would be and wanted to help others through this often-difficult time. During her parents' hospice journeys, she said, "All of the terrible things that can happen during end-of-life happened," such as having to get guardianship of her mother who had Alzheimer's. She has found that she has a special skill in working with those who have dementia.

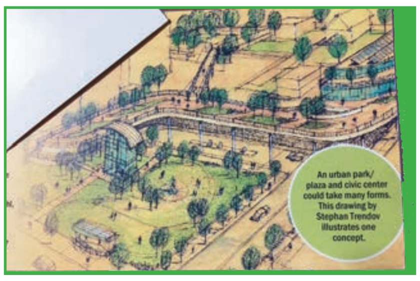
Services she offers range from patient advocacy, caregiver emotional support, hospice liaison support, and direct caregiving. "I strive to alleviate some of the stress that the caregiver can experience during this overwhelming experience and hold space so that they may be able to be more present with their loved one during this precious, transitional time," she said.

Wall said that the majority of her clients lack education about hospice and have a lot of fear about it. She serves as someone who has been through it and can hold the hand of the person, tell them what to expect, and have the emotional energy to engage with the hospice provider (which many people do not).

In addition to this work, Wall is a part-time Professor at Eastern Michigan University in aviation.

Christina Wall's website is cwalleoldoula.wordpress.com and her Facebook page is facebook.com/cwalleoldoula. She can be reached via email at cwalleoldoula@yahoo.com.

After ten years of work by a number of people, on November 6, 2018, the City of Ann Arbor voted for the Center of the City–the land bounded by Fifth Avenue, William, Division, and Liberty Streets–to become an urban park and civic center commons.



An urban park/plaza and civic center could take many forms. This drawing by Stephan Trendov illustrates one concept.

Next steps included forming a Center of the City Task Force, which made recommendations resulting in the formation of the Council of the Commons in 2020. An additional Community Commons Initiating Committee has met to discuss ways to activate the site. A section of land called the Library Lot is a parking lot surrounded by 14 plots of land, and part of the Initiating Committee known as the Green Team developed two of those plots into a community garden in the spring and summer of 2021. The Team has logged over 420 hours of volunteer time preparing, planting, and maintaining the garden. Members include Jeff and Christine Crockett, Alan Haber, Odile Hugonot Haber, Ilene Tyler, Ann Bannister, Marsha Benz, Shari Thompson, Sue Perry, Chad Monfreda, Rita Mitchell, Clare Lanaghan, Joet Reoma, and Linda Wan.

The resulting garden consists of annuals: sunflowers, zinnias, marigold, cleome, tomatoes, and basil; and perennials: bee balm, shasta daisies, coneflower, red yarrow, coreopsis, blanket flower, gayfeather, feverfew, lupine, delphinium, salvia, and a mix of wildflowers.

Joet Roma, a board member of Project Grow Community Gardens and a master gardener, has agreed to help plan the 2022 community garden on the Commons and expand it to other plots. He will be contacting the Michigan State extension service to enlist the help of other master gardeners to help plan and teach the volunteers. Jeff Crockett said that the Green Team's vision includes using the site to educate the public through labeling of the plants, QR coded signage which will link to websites, and periodic public events.

The garden is just a first step in the vision for the Commons. "Commoning" is "commonly pooled resources managed by the users," explained Alan Haber, who has been part of the initiative since the City asked for proposals in 2009 of what to do with the land above the underground parking garage. There is an international movement to bring this very ancient idea back into modern usage in cities in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere by creating spaces for people to come together, relax, exercise, socialize, and create projects that are of benefit to everyone.

Continued on page 37

Whether you are new or experienced
in home buying or selling, Linda is your
heart-centered
guide on your journey home.

kw ANN ARBOR
KELLERWILLIAMS. REALTY

VALIANT
REALTY

Linda B. Long Realtor®

734.531.7878
lindablong@kw.com
ValiantRealtyMI

2 Dandelions
BOOKSHOP
VISIT US IN DOWNTOWN BRIGHTON

words
wishes
wonders

Tues. - Sat. 10 - 8pm
Sunday 12 - 5pm
810.522.5310
428 W. Main St.
Brighton, MI 48116

Mention this ad when signing up for our loyalty program and receive a FREE button

2dandelionsbookshop.com

Pott Farms. A Kind Company

We are a regenerative hemp farm dedicated to responsibly producing great CBD.

We carefully craft our CBD Oil products using:

- Hemp flower grown regeneratively in MI
- Full-spectrum extract
- Third-party safety testing
- Organic ingredients
- Sustainable packaging

Shop online and at dispensaries including:

BLOOM CITY CLUB
Om of Medicine

Learn more at
pottfarms.com

MCLAREN WEALTH
STRATEGIES

BRINGING BALANCE TO YOUR FINANCIAL LIFE

Doug Gross, CFP®
Financial Advisor
Douglas.Gross@raymondjames.com

Sam Maness, CFP®
Financial Advisor
Sam.Paul.Maness@
raymondjames.com

Jason Coleman, CIMA®
Financial Advisor
Jason.Coleman@
raymondjames.com

Emily Rice
Relationship Manager
Emily.Rice@
raymondjames.com

Justin Rice
Investment Specialist
Justin.Rice@
raymondjames.com

315 Eisenhower Parkway
Suite 301
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

Phone: 734-944-7556

Fax: 734-661-1314
Toll-Free: 866-944-7556

For all of us, time marches on.
You may have been managing your finances sucessfully for many years.
You still feel you can manage the funds, but would like some oversight to help you out as things change.
You want someone who will listen, take good care of you, and not push you into the product of the day.
Check with us to discuss how our services might help to reduce your stress at a very reasonable cost.

Independent **Local** **Thoughtful Advice**

Securities offered through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. member FINRA/SIPC. McLaren Wealth Strategies is not a registered broker/dealer and is independent of Raymond James Financial Services. Investment Advisory Services offered through Raymond James Financial Services Advisors, Inc.

www.McLarenWealth.com

IGLESIA MARTELL
Law Firm, PLLC

Holistic Law
Practicing From The Heart

Angie Martell, Partner

Experienced attorney and mediator with over 30 years of legal experience.

Specializes in:
Divorce & Family Law • Criminal Defense • Estate Planning • LGBT Issues Mediation • Civil Litigation • Civil Rights Business Law • Litigation • Employee Rights

2723 South State Street, Suite 150, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
www.Iglesiamartell.com | (734) 369-2331

Where Do We Distribute The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal?

6,000 copies of The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal are distributed to more than 235 locations in the Ann Arbor area, including Crazy Wisdom Bookstore, Castle Remedies at the Parkway Center, the Food Co-op, Kerrytown, Nicola's, the Zen Temple, Sweetwaters, Pharmacy Solutions, Michigan Union, the Better Health Store, North Campus Commons, U-M, EMU, WCC, Arbor Farms, the Center for Sacred Living, Complete Chiropractic, the Lighthouse Center, Jewel Heart, Tsogyelgar, Yoga Space, Michigan Theater, Seva, Clark Pharmacy, and the Weber Center.

We also distribute to the offices of dozens of doctors, holistic health care providers and therapists.

If you'd like us to bring copies of *The CW Community Journal* to your office, studio or center, please call us at 734-665-2757 or email: bill@crazywisdom.net.

diamondworkmichigan.org
presents:

Diamond Approach® Retreat

Meditation and Inquiry Retreat
into the quality of Joy

January 28 and 29, 2022 Online Retreat

One of the barriers to feeling joy or happiness is being cut off from your heart's desire. Many spiritual paths have a prejudice against feeling this but if you can come in contact with your true desire in its fullness it can take you closer to yourself. When the joy aspect opens it becomes like a flowing in the heart, or a glowing. When you feel that, you might feel the rush of expansion and heartfelt happiness, and it feels like it comes right from you, and it is a part of you, or perhaps you feel that it is you. Questioning your attitude about desire and what you want can be a powerful exploration.

About the Diamond Approach:

This is a path developed by A. H. Almaas and made for our time. It includes the wisdom of the ancient traditions with the findings of modern psychology—designed to support a return to our essence, our true nature.

This work is experiential. It uses inquiry, a moment-to-moment exploration of what is true in our immediate experience, typically done in groups of two and three. We spend time with our challenges and our openings, all held in a loving openness.

Schedule:
Friday January 28
6pm to 9pm EST Cost: Free

Saturday January 29
9am to Noon EST & 1pm to 4pm EST Cost: $80

This retreat will be taught by Lou Weir a certified Diamond Approach teacher

What to expect:
We will have meditations, talks and a chance to practice inquiry, one of our foundational practices.

Cost: Friday Session is Free - Saturday Sessions $80

To Register or questions: Please contact Lou at the email below and indicate your interest in Friday only or Friday and Saturday

DWMich22@gmail.com

WHAT'S NEW
IN THE COMMUNITY

Continued from page 34

Odile Hugonot Haber, a retired nurse, goes to the Commons every Friday when a local church distributes pizza and some other organizations reach out to provide services and material help for homeless people. She enjoys the atmosphere of neighborliness and collective working to serve others in the community. She would like to see a playground built so that mothers can take turns watching children play while other moms use the library. She envisions concerts and events where people can sit outside and go to the surrounding restaurants. She thinks it is important for downtown dwellers to have a place to walk their dogs and get exercise outside and noted that while the University of Michigan campus is where many people now do this, that the campus is "for the students" and that there should be a place for the entire community. Jeff Crockett has been advocating for a fountain in Ann Arbor for twenty-five years, he said, and hopes to see one built here. He said that the Commons project has taken so long to come into being because some in the community differ on what should be done with city land. "Some people want to build up every square inch," he said, while he and others advocating for the Commons believe it's important to leave some space open for the community to use and enjoy.

Haber said that he hopes to see a civic center building as a way to enjoy and use the commons throughout the year, with a café. Ultimately, it is up to those in the community who want to be involved with its creation and maintenance what the Commons will become. Haber, Hugonot Haber, and Crockett are encouraged by the results that a lot of volunteers working together created in just one summer and believe this shows that the Commons is worth moving forward with as a city.

Said Alan Haber, "The commons is a form of social healing, exemplifying the traditional culture of mutual benefit, mutual responsibility, and mutual respect."

More information is online at annarborcommunitycommons.org. Jeff Crockett can be reached at jeffcrockett8@gmail.com, Alan Haber can be reached at megiddo@umich.edu, and Odile Hugonot Haber can be reached at odilehh@gmail.com.

Radical self-love and embodiment coach, writer, and podcaster, cat h. bradley (she prefers all lower case), recently returned her life and her practice to her hometown of Ann Arbor after spending 12 years in Brooklyn, NY.

While she currently works with clients remotely via zoom and will continue to offer this option for anyone who desires it, she looks forward to safely welcoming new local clients into her downtown Ann Arbor home studio. She describes her work as "integrative, somatic healing work." She said that she has observed that lots of coaches and classes talk about self-love in a theoretical sense, but she is most interested in the experience of it. As she was working on her own self-love in her alcohol addiction recovery, she explained that she heard people talking a lot about loving oneself but had no idea what that felt like. This is why, she explained, she now helps people explore what self-love feels like in the body and "how to make that love felt and real." She defined embodiment as "the inside matching the outside and vice versa." In a culture that "invites us to compartmentalize ourselves," she said, people get lost and disheartened. So, she helps people re-integrate, take actions aligned with their hearts, follow their intuition, reconnect with nature and their place as part of it, and experience more joy and pleasure in life.

Bradley said she works mainly with people who identify as women, who are interested in connecting their body, mind, and spirit, many of whom "have the things culture has told us we should strive for" but still don't feel happy, satisfied, or complete. She said that those she works with need to be ready to "do the work" and take responsibility for their growth and healing. Her own experience with recovery taught her that truth and accountability are paramount. Trauma can be explored and acknowledged, but ultimately the individual needs to decide to overcome her/his experiences. She said, while getting sober at 25 years old, "I realized that I could wait for my dad to love me the way that I want…. or I can take responsibility for my own life." She said there is "a lot of happy coaching going on," where people are afraid or avoid dealing with the darker aspects of life. "We're not meant to live a life that is happy all the time," she said, and we need "courage to deal with the dark as well as the light."

Bradley said that she works with most of her clients for three to nine months "for the most transformation." She offers a free discovery call to explore whether working together feels right for both parties.

She also has a blog and podcast in which she talks about embodiment, self-love, feeling and healing through our emotions, recovering our sense of humanity, and the healing power of art.

More information is available at cathbradley.com. cat h. bradley can be reached via email at chb@cathbradley.com.

Vegano Italiano, a fully vegan Italian restaurant, opened on Huron Street near downtown Ypsilanti in October of 2021.

Owner Maryrose Angelo, who is originally from New York City and moved to the area five years ago, adapted the foods she grew up with to make them plant-based. The menu includes pizza, pasta, salads, appetizers, sandwiches, and baked goods. Highlights are their cauliflower wings, eggplant cutlets, and banana coconut bread for dessert. The restaurant uses house-made almond ricotta and Violife plant-based cheeses. Local ingredients are used whenever possible: their dough and sub buns are from Cantoro Italian Market in Livonia; baked goods from Botanical Bakeshop in Milan; and their produce comes from Frog Holler in Ann Arbor.

The restaurant is takeout only and delivers within a two-mile radius. Different specials are offered weekly, and the Sunday special is always a breakfast pizza.

Vegano Italiano is located at 530 North Huron Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. More information and online ordering is available at veganoitalianomi.com. Specials are listed on their Facebook page facebook.com/veganoitalianomi/. They can be reached by phone at (734) 340-2617 or by email at rose@veganoitalianomi.com.

Submit your listing for the May through August 2022 issue.

Please note that the "What's New in the Community" column is part of the editorial (not paid-for-advertising) part of the CW Journal, and the editors may or may not include what you submit. Whether the editors include material or not will depend on space considerations, as well as other editorial issues, such as the need for high resolution jpgs and the overall mix of stories included in the "What's New in the Community" column in a given issue.

If you would like to submit information to be considered for this column, please email communitynews@crazywisdom.net, or drop off or mail information to the store: What's New in the Community, 114 South Main, Ann Arbor, MI, 48104. The firm deadline for submissions for the next issue (May thru August 2022) is March 1, 2022.

Crysta Goes Visiting

In this column, Crysta Coburn writes about crazywisdom-esque people and happenings around Ann Arbor.

Getting Crafty with Local Woodworker Chris Blackford

Blackford learned woodworking from his crafter mother, Donna, starting at an early age. He told me, "She taught me not only how to use a bandsaw, but also the joy of seeing someone's appreciation of something you've created with your own hands..."

Chris Blackford grew up in southern Indiana. "After attending Western Kentucky University I came to Eastern Michigan to be involved in the Forensics Speech and Debate team. Fell in love with the community, the state, and my lovely wife."

He learned woodworking from his crafter mother, Donna, starting at an early age. He told me, "She taught me not only how to use a bandsaw, but also the joy of seeing someone's appreciation of something you've created with your own hands. After attending art school at both Western Kentucky University and Eastern Michigan University I honed my skills in woodworking, and after over a decade in the hospitality industry I found that the two could connect for me in a way I didn't realize."

Blackford recently launched the well-named tYpsi Woodworking, based in Ypsilanti. He makes a variety of beautifully crafted wood items such as cutting boards, platters, coasters, customizable tap handles, bottle openers, wall art, and magnets. There are even a couple of tongue-in-cheek T-shirts with Ypsilanti puns. The shirts are not made of wood, but they are printed locally by family-owned Elmo's T-Shirts.

What made Blackford make the leap to starting his own business during a global pandemic? "I've been working in the service industry since I was 15 years old," he said. "As with many of the 20 to 40 year-olds who have decided to plant roots in Ypsilanti, we serve not only Ypsi, but the surrounding communities. The nights are hard and the winters are long, and as we all know, there is little to do in Michigan on a February night other than to frequent your local watering hole or attend your favorite restaurant. During Covid, many of us realized the value of serving ourselves in our own homes. My goal was to create utilitarian art that helps us pamper ourselves in the comfort of our own homes."

I had to ask about the obvious pun in the name tYpsi. Blackford is proud to live in Ypsi, he said, and, "While I plan to sell my work state-wide, I want everyone to know where it came from. The majority of my materials are locally sourced, including staves from Arbor Brewing Company barrels. We live in the best state of breweries in the country. You can get drunk anywhere, but in Ypsi, we get tYpsi."

He isn't sure what the future holds for tYpsi, but, "I'm humbled by the support of my friends and the community so far. Hopefully we'll be integrated in the community, working with restaurants and bars to help local businesses keep building and thriving."

As the child of a woodworker myself, I find myself delighted by every unique piece in the tYpsi online store. Blackford really manages to bring out the beauty of the wood. And I am impressed that most of the wood is sourced from Washtenaw and Wayne counties, and sustainability is a priority. I look forward to seeing the tYpsi logo in more local homes and businesses.

tYpsi can be found on Facebook and Instagram @typsiwoodworking and at tYpsiWoodworking.com. For more information, email typsiwoodworking@gmail.com.

Storytime with Ann Arbor Writer Shanda Trent

After growing up in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Shanda Trent moved to Ann Arbor with her husband in 1983. She originally went to school to be a teacher. She shared with me, "[I] started out at Kalamazoo College with the intent of becoming a High School Spanish teacher. After working at the Kalamazoo Nature Center, I transferred to Michigan State University. (Kalamazoo College didn't have an elementary degree at that time.) A year later, I learned that M.S.U. didn't give me full credit for my Kalamazoo classes. I finished my degree at Eastern Michigan University eight months sooner. I loved all three college experiences."

As for honing her writing craft, she said, "Besides a heavy focus on English Lit, Journalism, and Expository Writing, [I've done] ongoing polishing and craft of writing via SCBWI—Society of Book Writers and Illustrators." Her inspiration comes from life experience. "I write for and about very young children, ages one to six, informed by the experiences of students along with my now grown daughters. I now have the blessing and another perspective with my two newborn grandchildren."

> Trent finds herself drawn to "terse verse." Depending on the age of the targeted audience, a typical picture book has between 400 and 800 words. Said Trent, "I love the challenge of telling a satisfying story with word count limitations; every word has to pack a punch."

Trent finds herself drawn to "terse verse." Depending on the age of the targeted audience, a typical picture book has between 400 and 800 words. Said Trent, "I love the challenge of telling a satisfying story with word count limitations; every word has to pack a punch."

Her books are often fun as well as educational. In *Farmers' Market Day,* the readers follow a little girl as she excitedly makes her way through the Saturday farmers' market. The brightly colored illustrations by Jane Dippold really draw the eye. *Giddy-Up Buckaroos!* takes readers on a Wild West adventure and includes some Spanish words sprinkled throughout with a glossary at the back of the book, and *The Planet We Live On* lovingly teaches children all about our home, Earth.

We can continue to keep things local by purchasing Trent's books through our local independent bookstores. If you don't see them on the shelves, ask to special order. *The Planet We Live On* is also listed for purchase on Trent's website.

Find Shanda Trent online at shandatrent.com. She also has an author page on Facebook @ShandaTrentBooks. She can be contacted by email at shandatrentbooks@gmail.com.

Feeling Good with Jerome Stuart Nichols and The Butters Hygienics Co.

Jerome Stuart Nichols wants his customers to feel "The sense of being cared for. That's all I really care about." And I absolutely feel it.

I've been using shea butter lotions to soothe my dry skin since a friend recommended it to me while I was living in California, which has significantly dryer climates than Michigan. So, I was excited to find a handmade, plant-based company offering shea butter moisturizers practically in my own neighborhood here in Michigan. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. The Butters Hygienics Co. offers over 50 handmade items, "everything for face, body, hair, bath, and bedroom." Bonus, they are unabashedly queer—just like me!

Where did The Butters come from? Out of necessity. "I need lube and a lotion that meet my high standards. I've always been a person to just create what I don't see in the world. So, I gave it a try. I used my training in pâtisserie and viennoiserie (French and Italian pastry) from Le Cordon Bleu Scottsdale as well as cultural knowledge and research to figure out what I wanted. The same thing remains true today."

> I was excited to find a handmade, plant-based company offering shea butter moisturizers practically in my own neighborhood here in Michigan.

And as for the name, he said, "'The Butters' comes from a viral video where a white lady had just found out about raw shea butter and posed the question: where are y'all hiding the butters? Well, one of my goals with The Butters is to educate white people about oils and butters. 'Cause, honestly, white people have a lot of cultural fear of being oily, greasy, and looking poor or unkempt. In the black community (and many brown ones), these plant extracts are considered crucial to hygiene and almost spiritual in importance. Hence the full name The Butters Hygienics Co. We are here to help you take care of yourself, in the best ways possible."

As with all businesses, the Covid-19 pandemic and shutdowns had an impact. "We've gotten rid of all in-person marketing. No more cons, fests, markets, or fairs. But the pandemic has been excellent for us. Our business grew 400% last year and doubled again this year. We've focused on new marketing strategies and word of mouth to help us keep growing."

I became one of those new happy customers after seeing a post about The Butters on Ypsilanti's Neighborhood Theatre Group's Instagram. It was mid-pandemic, I was working from home, and the only other human I saw in-person was my husband. I needed to pause and relax badly! Luckily, The Butters sell bath bombs. I also picked up a bottle of Anti-aging Facial Toner made with rose water, calendula, and hyaluronic acid; deliciously scented sugar scrubs; and body moisturizer that all make my skin feel *amazing.*

If you have not yet discovered "the butters," you are missing out. In addition to these fantastic products, The Butters' website also has an educational blog so you can learn more about skin care, hair care, sexual health, and how different substances benefit different body and hair types. You may find just the thing you've always needed.

Shop The Butters Hygienics Co. at GetTheButters.com. Follow @getthebutters on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Pinterest, and YouTube.

LEAPS OF FAITH

TALES OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

Article and Photos By Laurel Decker

This column is a look at two brave souls who took a leap of faith to open their own business. What follows is a personal profile of Jeanne Blazo and Jeri Kay Thomas who are following their dreams and thriving despite the odds—and Covid.

2 Dandelions Bookshop

428 West Main Street, Brighton, MI 48116
2dandelionsbookshop.com.
(810) 522-5310.
Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday from Noon to 5 p.m.

As I walked into 2 Dandelions Bookshop on Main Street in Brighton, I was greeted by two women with smiles as cheerful as the color sprinkled about the store. As I noticed their outfits, I couldn't help but mention, "I love that you both wore yellow for the photos." Jeanne Blazo and Jeri Kay Thomas looked at each other's outfits and laughed while simultaneously explaining that it wasn't on purpose. They "just wear it a lot." I knew then that these long-time friends were in sync and that I would enjoy learning about them and what they created together.

Walking among shelves and tables stocked with publications, Thomas explained that less than two years ago, when they first opened the shop door, it was like a dream come true.

Walking among shelves and tables stocked with publications, Thomas explained that less than two years ago, when they first opened the shop door, it was like a dream come true. The two former schoolteachers were finally seeing the fruits of their labor. Each day they were building relationships with neighboring store owners, and customers were returning now that they discovered the only independent bookshop in Livingston County. They both agree that Brighton was ready for a local bookstore. Blazo adds, "Everything aligned" and they "were in the flow."

But then, almost a year into living their dream-come-true, Blazo and Thomas started hearing of the Covid-19 virus. Before long, the state of Michigan reported unyielding spikes in cases of infection. Hoping to halt the spread of the virus, Governor Gretchen Whitmer ordered all Michiganders to "Stay home and stay safe."

Like many small business owners, Blazo and Thomas sorrowfully put a pause on selling their wares to support the safety of their families and community members. However, the pause was more of an opportunity to make some adjustments.

Ultimately, they decided not to let the nightmare of a worldwide pandemic keep them from their small-town dream. After carefully considering their options, they agreed they would simply have to pivot.

Ultimately, they decided not to let the nightmare of a worldwide pandemic keep them from their small-town dream. After carefully considering their options, they agreed they would simply have to pivot. And in the coming months, "pivot" became a word they would return to again and again as they adapted to an uncertain future for their budding bookshop.

The pair admit that finding the best approach to managing 2 Dandelions Bookshop during a pandemic added tension to the already-steep learning curve of running a new small business.

Jeanne Blazo and Jeri Kay Thomas

The pair admit that finding the best approach to managing 2 Dandelions Bookshop during a pandemic added tension to the already-steep learning curve of running a new small business. They remind me that their background as kindergarten teachers was in education, not commerce. However, it's clear to me that what the women lack in experience, they make up for in many other ways that keep any business thriving. Their tenacity, creativity, intelligence, and optimism are part of the reason they were able to reopen once the quarantine mandate was lifted.

The first major pivot came as a well-timed opportunity to move their store across the street. With extra time on their hands, they gathered their supportive team of family and friends and moved every book. Along for the move was Myrtle the painted turtle, who at one time was a pet in Thomas' classroom. During my visit, Myrtle swam comfortably in her home among the children's books in the back of the store. She has the most visitors on summer weekends during the Farmer's Market, which takes place just behind the bookshop. Families with children now regularly time their visit to the market so they can wander over to the 2 Dandelions Bookshop courtyard for story time.

Blazo and Thomas believe that, pandemic aside, the best thing they did to help their business survive any variable was to do their diligence in the planning and preparation stages. So, rather than heading blindly into the world of retail, they joined support groups and networks related to new and local businesses as well as associations for book sellers. They also hired a consultant to guide them through the business development process. And they wrote a mission statement. "Although," Blazo laughs when she recalled the earliest drafts of their statement, "We didn't have this particular vision. We were more concerned with how the coffee would taste, and here we are, and we don't even have coffee yet."

Offering delicious coffee is still waiting on a temporary back burner. While business continues to blossom, the demand is that they focus on business strategy. Their aim is to be more efficient by creating a team of employees with diverse capabilities. They are fine tuning their efficiency based on the strengths of each individual involved in building their store.

They quickly learned that retail requires a fine balance between creativity and practicality. So, if one of their team is best at product placement, and another is gifted at processing the mounds of information involved with retail, they give their team the opportunity to contribute their best skills.

They quickly learned that retail requires a fine balance between creativity and practicality.

Energy Therapy
plus
Stress Management Coaching
equals
Balanced Living

It is the heart of the journey.
Ready for your next step?

Michelle McLemore, Healing Guide
michellemclemore.com
(517) 270-0986

Blazo uses Thomas as an example of how they learned to play to everyone's strengths. She explains, "We weren't able to meet in person, so Thomas set up FaceTime appointments so people could see what was available. She rode her bike and drove to make local deliveries." Blazo pauses to add a few more strengths Thomas has. Her compassion and connection to their customers is what led her to get on her bike recently to deliver a book to a customer who tested positive for Covid-19. Blazo adds, "People remember that." Thomas chimes in with "Something magical happens every single day."

It became clear as the mandate was extended, that the decision to continue selling books was not just about trying to make the shop financially survive the pandemic.

It became clear as the mandate was extended, that the decision to continue selling books was not just about trying to make the shop financially survive the pandemic. The phone calls from customers placing an order started to mean something more than a sale. It was a way of staying connected to a community that was physically disconnected. They soon realized they were not the only ones finding comfort in books to ease the psychological side effects from the mandated stay-at-home orders.

In the months that unfolded throughout the mass quarantine, studies discovered the effects of isolation. A June 2020 report by *QJM*, an international journal of medicine, explained that "Many psychological problems and important consequences in terms of mental health including stress, anxiety, depression, frustration, and uncertainty during Covid-19 emerged progressively." The psychological need for connection is one reason Blazo and Thomas pushed through during the darkest months of the pandemic.

Blazo admits, and Thomas nods in agreement, "It is evolving. And there are some overwhelming aspects that we just have to let go." They know the pandemic is still looming, and that their physical and mental health are more important than the details of running a store. There are times when emails go unviewed and calls go unanswered, but Thomas adds that at the end of the day, "It is bigger than us." They feel supported by their community and by an invisible source of serendipity. Thomas said this helps them to recognize that just as things were aligning before the pandemic, "Everything continues to align."

The evolving vision these women have for their small business is best described in their online bio which reads, "Finally, our dream has become a wish. A wish to scatter happiness and joy through the creation of our very own bookshop." And just as a dandelion ages and spreads its seeds abundantly, the 2 Dandelions Bookshop continues to mature and grow with our Southeast Michigan community. With each customer carrying their new books from the store or opening a package from 2 Dandelions Bookshop at home, happiness and joy extends beyond this small, but flourishing, book shop.

2 Dandelions
BOOKSHOP

Restoration Through Ink

By Cashmere Morley

Identity, as defined by the *Oxford Dictionary,* is “the fact of being who or what a person or thing is.” As a society, now more than ever, the meaning of one’s identity has never been more fluid or more open to interpretation. What defines someone’s identity? The answer is different for everyone. But for those asking that question, tattoo artist Jamie Wedge at the Lovely Monkey Tattoo in Whitmore Lake is hoping to provide a solution.

> *As a society, now more than ever, the meaning of one’s identity has never been more fluid or more open to interpretation.*

Wedge specializes in areola and nipple restoration tattoos. Her clients include women, men, and transgender people who have had “breast reconstruction, mastectomies, and other breast surgeries.”

A tattoo artist since 2006, Wedge’s portfolio consisted mainly of illustrative and floral pieces up until 2016. Coincidentally, that was the year that shop owner Dana Forrester opened the Lovely Monkey Tattoo, in Whitmore Lake, a sister-store to Ann Arbor’s Lucky Monkey Tattoo. 2016 would end up changing the course of Wedge’s career. It all began with a client who came to Wedge asking to cover cancer scars.

> *A tattoo artist since 2006, Wedge’s portfolio consisted mainly of illustrative and floral pieces up until 2016.*

“During her cancer battle, she had breast reduction surgery,” Wedge explained. “She had a lot of breast tissue left over, which was great. But they took her areola away.” The areola is defined as the “small circular area, in particular the ring of pigmented skin surrounding a nipple.”

“She asked me to cover [the cancer scars] up with imagery. This process took about six months. Over that time, I got to know more about her, and about her sister, who was going through the same thing, but she had a completely different situation.” That client ended up requesting a realistic areola tattoo, to replace her nipple loss.

After working with that client and learning more about her story, Wedge realized the impact her areola tattoos could have. Restoring that part of a woman’s body through art became an empowering moment for the both of them.

> *After working with that client and learning more about her story, Wedge realized the impact her areola tattoos could have. Restoring that part of a woman’s body through art became an empowering moment for the both of them.*

“Working with her,” said Wedge, “I realized that I needed to do something more.” Enter Dana Forrester.

Forrester just so happened to be searching for an artist who could tackle the challenges that come with realistic areola tattoos. Up until that experience with her client, Wedge had not considered areola tattoos as a great need, but here was Forrester, searching for an artist to regularly produce such a tattoo.

The space Lovely Monkey occupies was once a five-and-dime. Then an ice cream shop. But now, in its current incarnation, the little red and white Victorian-style

> *The little red and white Victorian-style building that houses the tattoo shop adds a punch of femininity to Whitmore Lake’s downtown scene.*

Jamie Wedge and Dana Forrester

Photo by Cashmere Morley

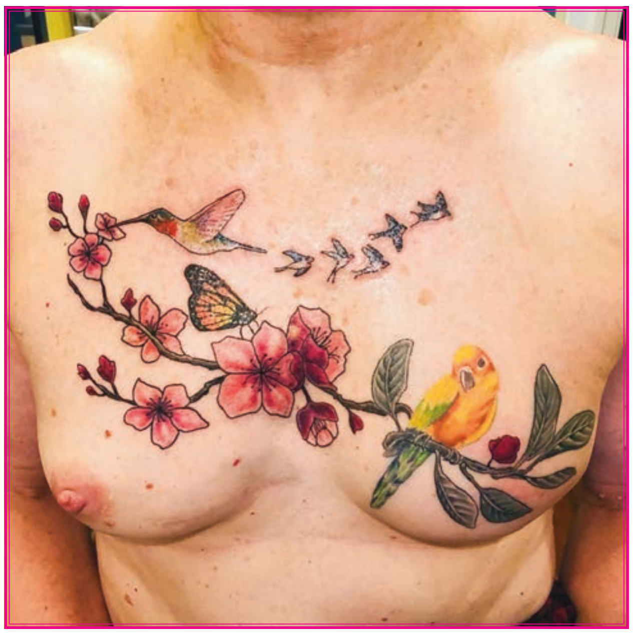
building that houses the tattoo shop adds a punch of femininity to Whitmore Lake's downtown scene. The Lovely Monkey is similar to its sister store, in that the shop is known for producing some of the most vibrant, creative, professional tattoo experiences in the area. But, Lovely Monkey sets itself apart by being women-run and women-focused. Once open, Forrester began seeking an artist who could mesh femininity with this unique method of tattooing to bring a slice of female empowerment not just to Whitmore Lake, but Michigan in general, in a way that had never been seen before in the tattoo world.

After 15 years in the tattoo business, Forrester saw a need for artists who could tattoo realistic-looking nipples. Forrester, who co-owns her tattoo shops with husband James Trunko, lost her sister-in-law Mary Clare Greenblatt, to breast cancer. After that, her mission to fill the void for a good nipple tattoo artist became a personal one. Now, she views this style of tattoo as one that not only brings peace and light to a stranger's life, but one that continues to honor Mary.

Areola tattoos require a knowledge of 3D realism. Pair that with the fact that the tattoo area is a sensitive one, both physically and emotionally, so the tattoo becomes a challenging piece, for even some of the most seasoned tattoo artists.

> *"Jamie really transforms people. Especially cancer patients. They have been through so much. And that was why I couldn't open another skull and dagger kind of shop–because they don't have the sensitivity clients like that need".*
>
> *–Dana Forrester*

"Not everyone can do this job," said Wedge. "I'm one of the only ones who really specializes in this kind of tattooing in Michigan." Since clients often come to Wedge after surviving cancer, or transgender top surgeries (just to name a couple of scenarios), Wedge often has scar tissue to work with and pigmentation to balance. Perhaps a client has one areola but not another—Wedge is tasked with matching existing shapes and colors. Sometimes, because of the circumstances often surrounding this kind of tattoo, it may be the first time a client's ever been inked.



"Jamie really transforms people," said Forrester. "Especially cancer patients. They have been through so much. And that was why I couldn't open another skull and dagger kind of shop—because they don't have the sensitivity clients like that need. Lovely Monkey can be that calm space for clients who need it. This shop has a softer side than your traditional tattoo shop, for that reason. And to have Jamie here, performing her magic, we're just changing lives, one client at a time."

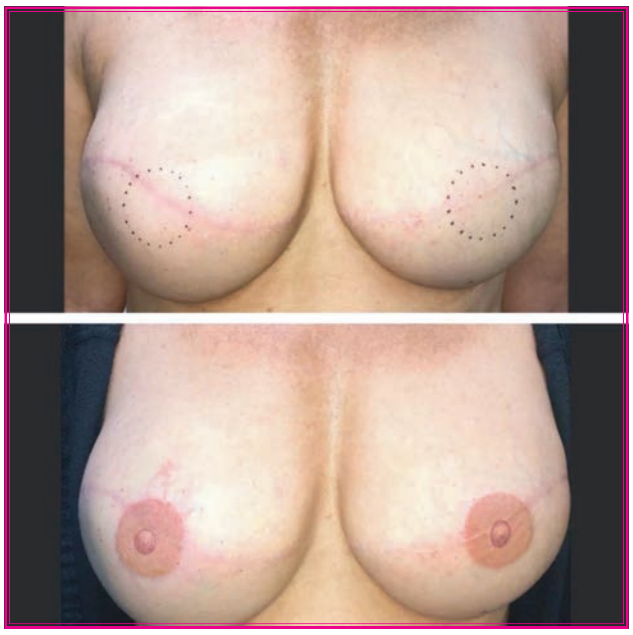
Wedge worked with a mentor in Austin, Texas, to hone her skill in areola tattooing. Areola tattooing, Wedge said, has not only changed her life, but she feels fortunate to be in a position where she can change lives through her art.

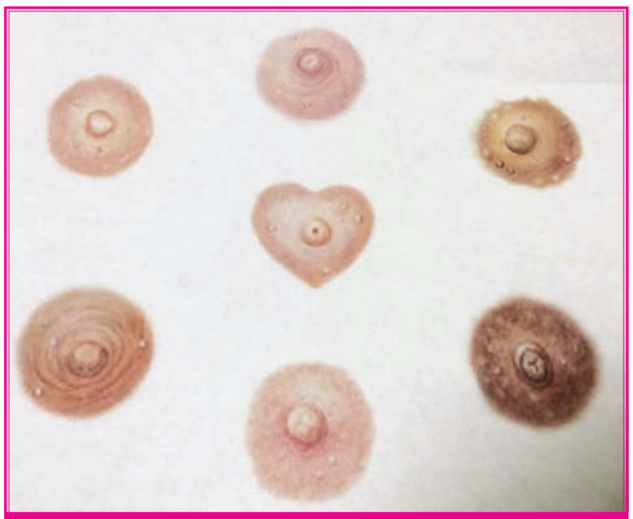
"In tattooing in general, you're changing someone's body forever. But, areola tattoos feel even more impactful. As a woman, I feel like if I woke up one day without a breast or without a nipple, I would feel like my womanhood got taken away from me. Like my femininity was stripped. With this work, I get to give identity back to people, even in small portions. Reconstruction doesn't always get it right. This tattoo is like tying up the loose ends, right? You can look in the mirror and feel confident again. That's what I'm able to give to people."

An areola tattoo is typically two sessions. Wedge said that working with existing scar tissue and incorporating realism takes time, and you don't want the end effect "looking like a bulls-eye."

"At the beginning, we asked for volunteers to come in and have a 3D nipple tattooed on them, anywhere on their body, just so we could nail the look and feel," said Forrester. "Then we would cover the tattoo with any tattoo of their choosing. We actually got quite a few men to come out, and some of them just kept the extra nipple, no cover-up."

A few years ago, Wedge and Forrester began a yearly event called "Win a Pair.'' This created the opportunity for potential clients who have suffered the loss of an areola to enter for a chance to win a pair of free nipple tattoos.





Samples of Jamie's Areola tattoos

"We award around three a year. Usually, the entries start around Christmastime. It's an opportunity for people who don't have the money, or who don't have the insurance to cover their loss, to feel whole again. That's where we are able to really come in, not only during this contest, but just with nipple tattooing in general, and really change people's lives," said Forrester.

"[Areola tattoos] are saving marriages, saving relationships, and saving someone's self-worth. It's letting them look in the mirror versus "look what happened. Look what I'm dealing with every day." It allows them to continue on with their day and kind of move on from the recovery process," said Wedge. "This is really the last thing that clients are doing to kind of get past whatever situation they are in, whether it be cancer, whether it be transitioning genders, whether it be a man or a woman coming in for an areola tattoo."

LOVELY
MONKEY
TATTOO

Visit The Lovely Monkey Tattoo at 9541 Main Street in Whitmore Lake, where they are currently open by appointment only. To see more of Jamie Wedge's work, visit her Instagram @jamiewedgemj.

The Celebrated Heart with Rachel Egherman

Using the HeartMath™ method and heart-centered practices to help you find your resilience and joy in life.

For a free consultation contact
celebratedheart.com
734-834-3223

Available for individuals, families, and organizations.

Out of My Comfort zonE

The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal asked a number of leaders in southeastern Michigan's conscious living community to reflect upon times in their lives that they've left their comfot zones to venture out in new ways. In the distant past or much more recently, we asked, what did you do, what inspired you, did it change you, inside or outside, big or little? Did you attend a new class, take an adventurous trip, go skydiving, stretch beyond a long entrenched boundary, start a new relationsip or end an old one, take a leap, retire, join the Peace Corps, go on a night trek in the wilderness, or just do something way out of the ordinary?

Leslie Blackburn (they, them) is a queer, white, omnisexual, polyamorous, ecosexual, kinky, genderqueer supporter for all beings to be authentically who they are. Their work blends Sacred Sexuality, Ancestral Healing, Grief & Emotional release, and Anti-Racism work to support collective liberation, self-awareness, vitality, empowerment, and joy. Leslie stewards the land at One Space: a private sanctuary, home, Temple and community space on 3.7 wooded acres in Ann Arbor, Michigan. For the past ten years, Leslie has been pouring their story and life's work into their first book: Sacred Sexuality: Listening to Our Bodies, which is currently being edited in preparation for publication. Support this work and receive sneak peeks of the book by becoming a patron on her website LeslieBlackburn.com.

Photo by Robert Chester

Meeting Our Discomfort to Support Collective Liberation

By Leslie Blackburn

The sun was warm and bright the day I met Dragonfly.

It happened fourteen years ago at a corporate picnic, back when I was an engineering manager with 15 years in the automotive industry. A dragonfly landed on me. It looked at me, cocking its head, flew away and back again, as if trying to get my attention. By the third time, it did. Something shifted that day. I'd been questioning, and this was my answer. It wasn't long before I abandoned my corporate career and followed a path that led me to the Peruvian jungles, the pyramids in Egypt, new teachers and practices, and most importantly, to the temple of my own body. In so doing, I found my new work in the world as a sacred sexual healer.

The biggest part of this journey was inward. As I got in touch with my body and listened, I was able to unwind trauma from my past. In connecting deeply with myself, I found I was better able to connect deeply with others and share this path. Of course, along the way I bumped up against deep societal conditioning around gender and sexuality. All of this was an ongoing process of "stepping out of my comfort zone." Unknown to me, the biggest was yet to come: waking up to my whiteness and racism at age 48.

Used to be, I associated the word "racism" with things like beatings, shootings, slavery, lynchings, and the KKK. I thought that since I wasn't part of these things, I wasn't racist. I thought I was one of the "good white people."

Then, through the sweet gift of a relationship and with help from some amazing beings who held me in a place of care with a willingness to help me see, I had an uncomfortable awakening: I realized that racism is in my body because of the culture I was born into and because of my ancestry. I started to see how racism shows up in my actions even when I don't realize it.

> It wasn't long before I abandoned my corporate career and followed a path that led me to the Peruvian jungles, the pyramids in Egypt, new teachers and practices, and most importantly, to the temple of my own body.

As it happened, at the time I had also been exploring my genealogy. My people come from England, Germany, Scotland, the Netherlands, Ireland, Switzerland and perhaps others. In most cases they came to the USA eight to ten or more generations ago and settled in rural, agricultural northern Ohio. Huge parts of my lineage were part of colonization of this continent.

This goes beyond mere historical fact. Whether or not I liked my family history, even if my family members weren't a part of active violence, they were there during those eras and absorbed the violence, perhaps perpetuating more, perhaps numbing out and ignoring it as a way to cope. As a body-focused practitioner, I realized that the fallout of all the massacres and violence involved in conquering and colonization *is present in me now,* and in so many of us alive right now in North America. And I saw that by ignoring of all this, I was actually creating more harm.

I also woke up to realize that my ignoring and my silence were a facet of my privilege, that because I walk in the world in a white body, I could ignore and shove aside uncomfortable things from a place of relative safety that people in black, brown, yellow, red, and olive-skinned bodies often never experience as they navigate this world.

When I started to realize all of this, after my defensiveness around this started to crumble, I felt a huge, *huge* wave of guilt and shame. I didn't want to face it or see it. I didn't want to believe that racism is in me. Certainly, that can't be true!

It took time. I slowed down and listened. I observed my habits of thought and my body sensations in different situations. I also redirected my attention to teachers, influencers, healers, and artists of color in my social media feed. I began studying with folx experienced in unpacking racism from our bodies and started to really unwind the way my body carries white supremacy. By 'white supremacy,' I mean a construct created around colonization, centered on the idea that someone or something is innately and inherently better than someone or something else. This shows up in so many ways: power-over aggression, extraction, urgency, productivity: a constant inner dialog and way of being that insists we must compete and dominate and "be on top of."

I invite other white folx to look inside and to see this, too. This is going to create discomfort. That's okay.

I want to care for us as we hear and listen to each other. Instead of bypassing awareness of the differences in our experiences due to racism, I wish for us to acknowledge them. Instead of thinking we're not part of the problem, let's gently bring awareness to the ways we continue to perpetuate both the external systems and the internal habits of thought and being that are so deeply engrained in our bodies that we don't even see them. Let's bring our awareness into the blind spots. For example, if you are a white woman, have you ever clutched your purse or bag closer to you when walking by a man of color? Or locked the car doors while driving by a man of color on the street? Do you respond in the same way when you are near a white woman? A white man? An excellent resource for getting curious about many other examples, and what's emerging in your own body is the book "My Grandmother's Hands" by Resmaa Menakem.

I'm now seeking to co-create a culture of care where we can lean into our discomfort together and unwind these old stories from our bodies and be responsible for our actions.

I'm now seeking to co-create a culture of care where we can lean into our discomfort together and unwind these old stories from our bodies and be responsible for our actions. How do we do this together? Staying swallowed up with feelings of guilt is not the answer. We've had a huge rupture in the relational space of our shared human experience. That's where the trauma happened. People killing people, people losing awareness of the interconnectedness of ourselves with one another and the planet, people forcing others into mistrust of their own bodies.

The way through is to find the support needed to stay in and continue to grow our awareness. Since the rupture happened in the relational space, the healing needs to happen in the relational space. In my own process I've identified four key foundations to feel safe again to be who we are, to make mistakes and still be loved, to relax and allow instead of brace for impact.

Repairing our relationships with:

1. Body
2. Ancestors/Spirit
3. Community
4. Nature/Earth

Where do we begin, and how can we contribute? There are many ways to begin addressing the problems of this pervasive and systemic dis-ease. Introspective self-work is a foundation for conscious relating, and vice versa. So, to heal racism systemically and socially, going inward with self is a great place to start. For example, healing our relationship with ourselves and our own bodies can support feeling safe to reach out for human support. Or perhaps the care of a trusted friend can help us feel safe in our own body. Or maybe establishing a felt connection with the land and nature brings some ease to remember our ancestors. It's a nonlinear dance to rebuild, repair, and settle our nervous systems to be able to receive and open to our vitality and pleasure. And from this place we can move into deeper healing together.

My prayer for all people is to return to our compassion and wisdom as humans: to remember our interconnectedness, our accountability for our actions, and our responsibility for co-creating a culture of care for our bodies, ourselves, each other, nature, and the planet.

Out of My Comfort Zone is continued on the next page.

LOVELY MONKEY TATTOO

Physician Referred

3D Nipple & Areola Tattoos

Whitmore Lake, Mi
Lovelymonkeytattoo.com
artist@lovelymonkeyink.com
734-333-5067

Victoria Schon
SACRED SOUND

Sacred Sound Journey
Cacao Ceremony

www.victoriaschon.com

Out of My Comfort zonE

continued...

Wasentha Young possesses a comprehensive and diversified background in art, writing, and mind/body/spirit practices (Tai Chi, Meditation, Qigong), that allows her to service individuals, universities, retreat centers, and corporate entities in the fundamental methods in building self-care and innovative lifestyles. You can learn more about her work at peacefuldragonschool.com, wasentha.com, or wasenthasmosaics.com.

Photo by Edda Pacifico

Being a Parent to a Parent

By Wasentha Young

I couldn't find her anywhere. I went to all the places where she could be, asked store clerks, drove by frequented bus stops and walking patterns, and then went back to her apartment. In her bedroom I found her mobile phone, apartment keys, and her ID. I was uncomfortable and a bit in a panic. How long should I wait before I call the police? My brain said "*long enough*." I made the call.

The night before she sounded quite distressed. I went to her home and found she had barricaded herself in her apartment and demanded that if I was who I said I was that I use my key. I went back to my car, got my key, and pushed the door open. We talked for a while. She kept saying, "Nobody is taking me away and putting me into a hospital." I assured her that that was not happening, settled her down for the night, and went home. First thing the next morning I called to check on her—and called and called. I had this sinking feeling that all was not well.

Having reached the police, I explained that I had not been able to locate my mother for at least four hours and that was unusual. I asked how long I had to wait before I could file a missing person report. They said that with the elderly, right away. When I gave the officer her name he said, "Ah, yes I have her name here. She is at St. Joe's. We found her in the street in a state of hyper paranoia."

> The night before she sounded quite distressed. I went to her home and found she had barricaded herself in her apartment and demanded that if I was who I said I was that I use my key.

Off to St. Joe's I went. *I found her*! When I showed up, much to my surprise, she looked displeased. I guessed that her leaving her phone and keys behind must have meant that she didn't want to be found. *Maybe.* But what I knew for sure was that the last thing she, and I, would have wanted was for her to become a ward of the state.

The doctor told me that she was dehydrated, in a state of hyper anxiety, had vascular dementia, and that she needed rehabilitative care. After rehab they would not want to release her—unless they knew that I was willing to give her 24/7 care.

I had two weeks to convert my apartment and provide my mom a bedroom of her own. We both had lived independently a good portion of our lives and I knew that we both were going to require stepping out of our comfort zone to make this happen. That step out was a result of the life changes my mom was going through—the daily compromises and changes were decisions I had to make for both our sake.

For me, both are connected to my mind/heart. Both are uncomfortable and both, in this case, are ongoing. The moment I would find comfort, my mother would have another episode. (I call her memory losses "episodes.") Most times I can tell that she is having an episode because she spends a lot more time sleeping, and she refuses to drink water. Her condition—vascular dementia—is a stair step experience with a bit of recovery for each downward slope, but never back to where it started. They seem to be like mini strokes.

> I adjust—like a frog in water that is set at a temperature to eventually boil. Oh… this is warm… not so bad… oh this is getting warmer… hmmm, maybe not so bad—and so on.

I adjust—like a frog in water that is set at a temperature to eventually boil. Oh… this is warm… not so bad… oh this is getting warmer… hmmm, maybe not so bad—and so on. There are times when the water seems so hot that I want to hop out and run. But, there are also many gems of wisdom I've gained from the experience of stepping out of my comfort zone.

Stepping outside of my comfort zones seem to be ongoing and always involve learning and new horizons. My mother's past demons rear their heads as the webs that once held them become more frail. In caring for her, knowing her story has been a blessing when others would have disregarded her as a babbling, lost her marbles crone, or given her a pill in order to roll her into a corner and could go about their business.

Speaking on stepping out of my comfort zone… looking in my inner emotional mirror can really make me feel out of comfort. There is always something I don't want to see… times when I could have been a bit more patient, compassionate, understanding, and less ridged. Once I accept and acknowledge my own humanness multidimensionally, I move forward with more patience, compassion, and understanding, and go with the flow more easily.

> Stepping outside, or within, to exceed one's comfort zone happens in many ways. I have assessed that the steps manifest due to "life" and "self"—if one chooses to take the steps.
>
> —Wasentha Young

In another fashion, caring for my mother is like parenting in reverse—*Benjamin Button* style. For some this experience has familiarity if they have parented through infancy, childhood, teen, and young adult—which she enters at any given time. However, childless, by choice, I am learning some parenting skills. I have often wondered if we are all hardwired to learn these skills within our lifespan, no matter our personal choices.

Uncomfortable things I have learned along the way:

- It is not easy, at my age, to let go of expectations and respect my mother's decline.
- I try not to "fix" her but support her on her journey.
- I've learned to connect with the understanding of her journey when she hears voices from the past and sees things that are not based in my reality.
- I've learned to knowing when to help, when to let her do it on her own, and how to keep her safe as we explore her potentials in every moment.
- I've found compassion for her and myself as I try to make peace with expressions of our anger, frustration, and grief.
- Artistic throughout her life, I watch how she expresses her creativity *now* without trying to impose.
- Whenever necessary, I make adjustments for at-home safety.
- I offer stability and know when to release the routine.
- Fiercely independent, my mother was never one to join to play bingo or hold hands and sing Kumbaya—I have had to remove her from the cookie cutter adult-care and groups suggested by therapists, social workers, and health insurance programs. Alternatively, I have delighted and witnessed her dancing with her walker or holding my hands to eclectic styles of music, and hear her spontaneously singing about what she sees, reads, or feels.
- I find ways to help her find peace from the "mean" voices.
- I have found home care with people who really care with compassion, understand the common humanity in her experiences and expressions, and are committed.
- I connect and go with the flow of the emotions behind what she cannot put into words.

> I have grown accustomed to stepping out of my comfort zone, with some comfort. And yet, it is still quite uncomfortable.

I may be an independent spirit, but I have learned to ask, meditate, pray, focus, and act on my needs and I am thankful as I watch manifestations of grace surround me with support. I have grown accustomed to stepping out of my comfort zone, with some comfort. And yet, it is still quite uncomfortable. However, I relish in my continued learning–never done, never done.

* * *

ANN ARBOR
PHARMACY
Apothecary • Compounding • Boutique

$10 off $30+ purchase

2418 E Stadium, A²
Next to Trader Joe's
734.677.5555
Full service pharmacy
Free delivery (3 mi radius)

KOKOPELLI'S KORNER LLC
SPIRITUAL SHOP
Oracle Card Readings
Specialty Organic Teas
Essential Oils
Drums and Chimes
and much more!
Art, Tarot & Candles
Tumbled Stones and Crystals
Smudge Sticks and Incense
111 E Grand River, Howell, MI 48843 • 586.630.9323

Peaceful Dragon School
Enrich Your Health
reduce stress, increase concentration, and improve balance
Tai Chi and Chi Kung (Qigong)
Peaceful Dragon School
1945 Pauline Blvd., Suite B
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Easy parking - 1 flight of stairs
Phone: 734-741-0695
info@peacefuldragonschool.com
Ongoing Classes
Crazy Wisdom Discount $10
Use code: CW2022
Classes Begin January 10
Master Wasentha Young
Experience a sense of harmony and well being through the self-care practices of tai chi and chi kung [meditation; moving stretches, visualization and acu-points]. You will find quality instruction and professional care at the Peaceful Dragon School.
www.PeacefulDragonSchool.com

Weekend Getaway

Greenleaf— A Southern Sanctuary

By Petula Brown

Steve and Diane Newell

Over the course of my midwestern travels, I've developed a love/hate relationship with interstate highways. They provide an efficient means to reach a destination but lack the character of local byways. Rest stops are reliable, but the highway is a predictable excursion with few opportunities to embrace the unique cultures and gifts of smaller communities. So, I relished the chance to visit Onsted's Greenleaf Mansion by way of Michigan Avenue. Though very familiar with Ypsilanti and Saline, I reimagined the experience as a traveler whose only community exposure may be highway exit signs. The drive became a means to foster a stronger understanding of a village's distinctive traits or a township's historical significance. For me, that occurred driving through downtown Clinton, a village named in honor of former New York Governor DeWitt Clinton. Continuing through the Irish Hills, the serpentine road was a contrast from a straightforward highway path. While the drive to Greenleaf, located in the village of Onsted took less than an hour, I felt like I arrived in a simpler era for a respite from the 21st century.

A shared appreciation of antiques, which began with dates to antique shops prior to their 52-year marriage, means guests can expect to find distinctive features that aptly balance elegance, comfort, and novelty.

Greenleaf's homage to the past is understandable given its origin as a farmhouse built in 1873 by its namesake, Charles Greenleaf. Its evolution as a bed and breakfast has been a labor of love orchestrated by innkeepers Steve and Diane Newell. They've owned the property for over 15 years and spent a decade completing renovations.

Steve's experience as an appraiser and Diane's skills as a professional chef were well suited to steward the Mansion's journey. A shared appreciation of antiques, which began with dates to antique shops prior to their 52-year marriage, means guests can expect to find distinctive features that aptly balance elegance, comfort, and novelty.

The Mansion's six accommodation options include three suites with private bathrooms and fireplaces.

Furniture throughout the Mansion proudly honors the site's Victorian roots while serving as a backdrop to the Newell's unique touches and eclectic finds. The tigerwood Murphy bed in the Traveler's Room is a creative adaptation for a limited space. The penny floor bathroom within the Governor's Suite is an artistic installation as well as a bold design choice. The Newell's introduction of a bar in the veranda enhances the communal tone and serves as a useful amenity for social events. Coffee stations featuring Starbucks products adorn all rooms in lieu of phones and televisions. Plush robes provided to guests reinforce Greenleaf's relaxed aura. The Mansion's six accommodation options include three suites with private bathrooms and fireplaces, while three other rooms have shared bathrooms. Every room has distinctive features to set it apart.

Greenleaf's dining room, adorned with a classic grandfather clock and the warm lighting of a shared chandelier, provides the ideal backdrop for Diane's inspired breakfast offerings. To truly appreciate the character of Greenleaf, a tour with Steve is a must. You'll discover the nods to the mansion's farmhouse roots which complement the house's tone of unpretentious luxury.

Though impressed by the relaxed elegance of the Mansion, I was drawn to the natural beauty of the mature landscaping surrounding Greenleaf. As master gardeners, the Newell's have nurtured the property's five acres. The vegetable garden's bounty informs Diane's culinary offerings. Several outdoor lounge areas provide room for group activities, but also options for individuals to have space for reading or reflection. Entering the tent-style gazebo, large enough to host yoga classes, was reminiscent of arriving at a modest sanctuary where guests can concentrate on inner wellness by minimizing external distractions. The recent addition of a rose garden not only provides a welcomed respite but has spiritual significance as a Newell family memorial. Beyond Greenleaf, visitors can explore regional wineries, visit the 654-acre Hayes State Park for hiking, boating, and fishing, tour Hidden Lake Gardens, shop at numerous antique stores along US-12, and seek out kettle lakes within the Irish Hills region.

Beyond Greenleaf, visitors can explore regional wineries, visit the 654-acre Hayes State Park for hiking, boating, and fishing, tour Hidden Lake Gardens, shop at numerous antique stores along US-12, and seek out kettle lakes within the Irish Hills region.

Nature's tranquility, Greenleaf's comforts, and the Newell's warmth combine to create a welcoming retreat. The elegance of Victorian furniture and hand-pressed bed sheets are impressive. The variety of activities within and beyond Greenleaf's five acres provide ample opportunities to experience and embrace the natural beauty of southeastern Michigan. The unique flair of Diane's culinary gifts (and ability to accommodate dietary needs), Steve's antique finds (visit with Miscellaneous—an artistic installation in the office—during your stay) and their 50+ year relationship (chronicled in an endearing photo album) gives Greenleaf a character that's an extension of the owners' personas—creative, cozy, and classic.

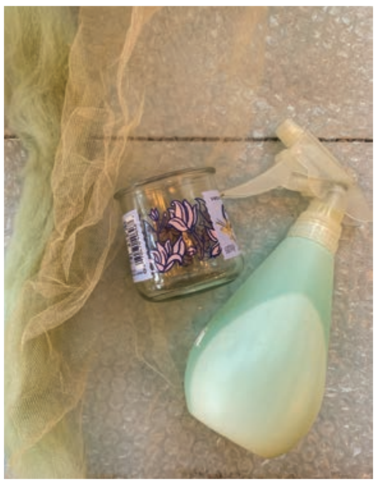
Greenleaf is located at 247 South Main Street in Onsted, MI. You can learn more online at greenleafmansionbnb.com. To contact Greenleaf email thegreenleaf247@yahoo.com or call (517) 467-6620.

Hand Crafting

Wet Felted Vessels

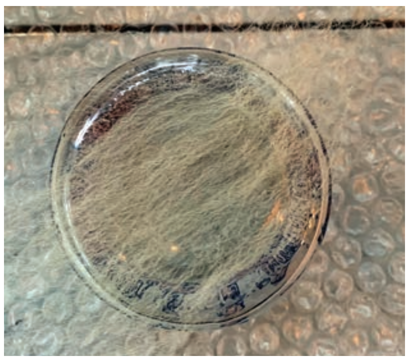
By Jennifer Carson

Looking for a fun craft to make with the kids or an easy to make, but beautiful, gift for a friend? Learning to wet felt a small vessel is quick and easy. You just need a few supplies, many of which you already have in your home!

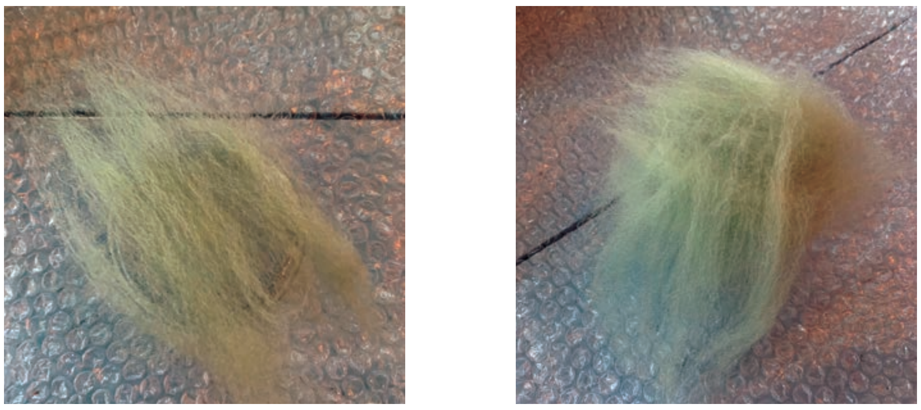


- A glass form—I used a small glass bowl with tall sides and an empty yogurt container
- A couple pieces of bubble wrap about 12” x 12”
- A piece of netting, about 18” x 18”
- A spray bottle
- A couple drops of dish soap
- A couple of ounces of wool roving

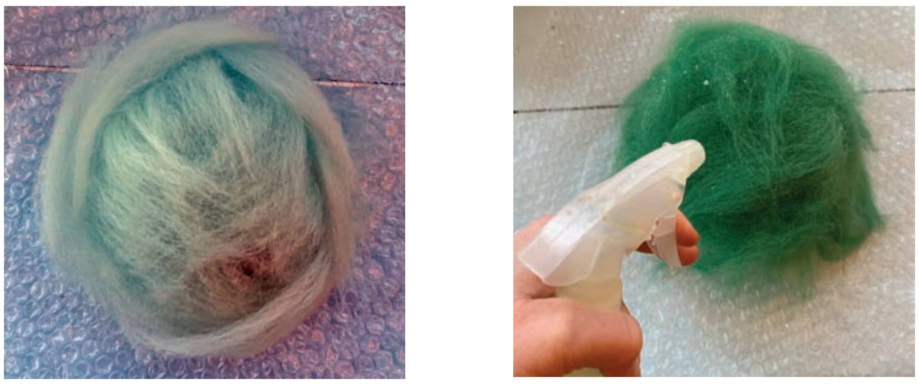
To get started, lay out one piece of bubble wrap on your kitchen counter. Place your glass form in the middle of it, upside down. Pull a length of your roving from the skein. Pull a length of roving from that and place it on top of your form.



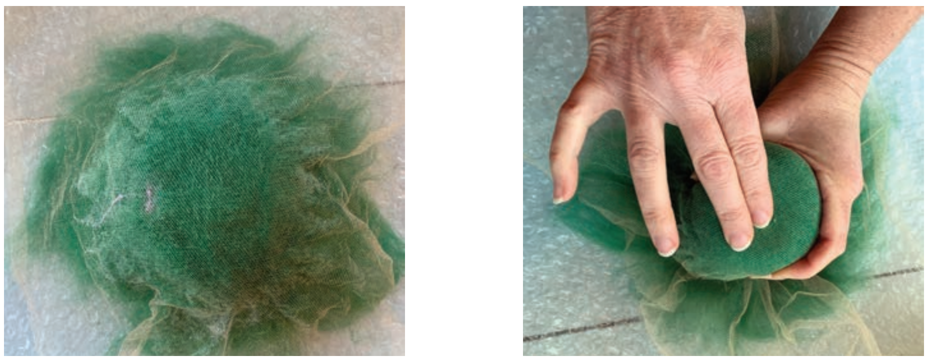
Continue to pull lengths and lay them on your form in a crisscross fashion. You want each layer to go in a different direction than the one underneath it.



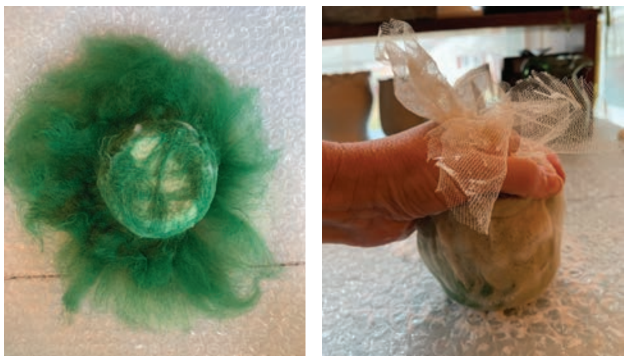
Continuing layering your wool strips up the sides of the glass form. Add more layers of a second color if you choose!



When you’ve got your form nice and covered with overlapping strips of wool, fill your spray bottle with hot water and a couple drops of liquid dish soap. Spray your wool. Cover it with your piece of netting, then pat it down. Spray and pat until the whole thing is wet. Give it a little squeeze with your hands and make sure all the wool is wet.



Hold the netting tight with one hand and start to felt your fibers with the other, moving your finger in small circles at first. If you feel a little resistance, spray a bit more. When the bottom of your vessel starts to get “soapy,” begin felting the sides, again with small circles at first. Don’t forget to rotate your form so that you are getting all sides. Eventually, you will begin using your whole hand to felt your vessel. Spray with more soapy water if needed.



Once you have the sides wet and lightly felted, remove the netting and pull the dry, unfelted fibers toward the bottom of your vessel. Wrap the netting around the vessel and grasp it with one hand on the top. Spray the vessel and continue felting with your free hand for 5 minutes. Dunk in a sink full of hot water, squeeze excess water out, spray and continue felting for a couple of minutes. Dunk in a sink full of cold water, squeeze excess water out. Take your felting off of the form and turn inside out. Place back on the form, spray with soapy water, and felt again for a few minutes.

Wrap your vessel in a piece of your bubble wrap and roll it back and forth for a couple of minutes. Remove your felted vessel from the glass form and squeeze excess water out. Lay a towel on the floor or counter and throw your vessel onto the towel about 50 times—this helps “full” the wool. Now, you can either stuff your vessel with a plastic bag to help it keep it’s shape while it dries, or you can put it back on the form and let it dry.

When dry, embellish how you want. I used embroidery floss and beads, but you could also needle felt a design on, too!

Jennifer Carson is a local artist and author who enjoys creating beautiful items for home and family. Browse over 60 sewing patterns for both handcrafting and machine sewing to inspire you online at the dragoncharmer.com.

All Creatures Great & Small

Animal Hospice —

Honoring Our Pets at the End Of Their Lives

By Monica Turenne

From the moment we adopt our pets to the end of their lives, they are, without question, an integral part of our family. Our relationship with them plays an important role in our lives as their love for us is like no other love. They bring us joy, make us laugh, and they bring comfort and healing when times are tough. While we have always understood this, the isolation of Covid-19 quarantine periods have highlighted the vital role pets play in our mental health.

Because our pets mean so much to us, it is very difficult to think about them growing old or developing a terminal or life-limiting illness. It's even harder to think about living our life without them.

So, what happens when our pets grow old and need special care? What happens if they become chronically ill with conditions that cannot be cured or necessitate therapies that would be significantly stressful to them or are too costly?

I was frustrated by the limitation of only being able to offer two choices when a pet was diagnosed with a severe life-threatening disease—either choose a path that cost thousands of dollars or euthanize.

These are the questions I asked myself for many years when I worked in a brick-and-mortar practice. I was frustrated by the limitation of only being able to offer two choices when a pet was diagnosed with a severe life-threatening disease—either choose a path that cost thousands of dollars or euthanize. I felt like there was no middle ground. Why wasn't there an option in the middle which would provide comfort and a good quality of life for the pet? When I learned about hospice and palliative care for pets, I realized I had found the middle ground. Hospice bridges the gap between surgeries or treatments that either might not be financially feasible or in the best interest of the pet and a decision to euthanize.

What is palliative and hospice care? These two words are often used interchangeably. While there is some distinction, for simplicity I will refer only to Animal Hospice here.

What is animal hospice?

Animal hospice is care for animals that focuses on the patient and family's needs and helps pet parents when their pet has a terminal or life-limiting illness for which there is no cure. The focus of hospice is helping families provide the best possible quality of life for their pet for as long as possible. Animal hospice also provides the family a degree of preparation for death by providing emotional support to the pet parent as they navigate through this difficult time. Hospice is very intimate and very personal, and while it is also very difficult, it can be one of the most beautiful and rewarding times a pet parent has with their pet.

The focus of hospice is helping families provide the best possible quality of life for their pet for as long as possible.

When does animal hospice start?

There is much variation for this but generally, hospice starts when a pet parent understands that their pet has a terminal or life-limiting illness and is entering the last stages of his/her life. It is when pets need their families to provide care in a different way by shifting the focus from "fixing and curing" to to comfort care and helping their pet live their best life for as long as possible. At this stage, pet parents want to discuss *how* to assess their pet's quality of life and if any medications, supplements, or diet can help their pets be comfortable and pain-free. It is also at this time that preparations for their pet's death are discussed, including options such as euthanasia or hospice-supported natural death as well as what options are available for aftercare. These are very difficult and emotional topics. It is with the loving care and communication of a hospice veterinarian that can help the pet parent discuss these issues and feel supported and understood.

What types of conditions are appropriate for hospice?

The most obvious answer here is a terminal disease like cancer. But there are many other situations when hospice is very appropriate such as chronic arthritis and disc disease, chronic kidney disease, chronic liver disease, chronic GI conditions, endocrine diseases, and cognitive decline, to name a few.It is very important for the pet parent to understand the physiology of their pet's condition in order to understand what symptoms to look for and understand when to reach out for help.

Complementary medicine has given countless patients not only relief from physical symptoms, such as pain and nausea, but also spiritual assistance as the spirit and body separates at the end of life

Veterinarians certified in Animal Hospice and Palliative Care (CHPV) have obtained advanced training to be able to guide the pet parent through this stage of their pet's life. During a Hospice Consultation, the certified veterinarian provides information regarding the pet's illness such as the trajectory of the disease. They also discuss how to assess quality of life as well as providing pain management, palliative care, nutritional counseling, and how to manage mobility and hygiene concerns. While this is all important, hospice veterinarians also support the family during this time. They take the time to provide guidance for the whole family as this can be one of the most difficult aspects of pet parentship.

Realizing that your pet has entered the final stages of their life can be very difficult and scary.

As a Certified Hospice veterinarian, it has been my honor to have helped hundreds of families and pets through the hospice process. I am also a holistic veterinarian which has allowed me to provide very specialized care for my patients and offer not only traditional medications but also acupuncture, herbal therapy, ozone therapy, essential oils, Reiki, and more. Complementary medicine has given countless patients not only relief from physical symptoms, such as pain and nausea, but also spiritual assistance as the spirit and body separates at the end of life.

The additional training I gained from the Certification process has helped me to understand how to recognize pain earlier, what herbs and medications to use, and when and how to use them. It has given me a deeper understanding of the physiology and trajectory of disease as well as the process of dying itself. Many people are afraid when their pet receives a terminal diagnosis because they do not know what to expect. Being able to explain what is likely to happen helps mitigate this fear and allows pet parents to be able to care for their pet in a much more present manner. By focusing on this, the bond you share with your pet is strengthened and the love you share together truly deepened.

I can think of no better way to demonstrate both the sadness and love that can be experienced with animal hospice than to provide a quote from a wonderful pet parent and family which expresses their experience with hospice for their boy Kody, a nine-year-old Labrador Retriever with cancer:

Words cannot convey how the hospice process helped me and my family to start the grieving process and to stay present with him as his physical body deteriorated. The love we had for Kody is immense and we still miss him, but not with the overwhelming grief we had at losing a dog suddenly, or with little preparation.

This article is dedicated to Darwin (aka Dar Dar), Dr. Turenne's nine-year-old Cavalier who passed away from heart failure on June 27, 2021, after two and a half months of hospice care.

Dr. Monica Turenne DVM, CVA, CT, CHPV is the owner of Four Paws Veterinary Wellness. She is certified in veterinary acupuncture, animal hospice, and palliative care. You can learn more about her practice at fourpawsvetwellness.com.

FOUR PAWS
Veterinary Wellness

Bringing the Best of East and West to Your Home

FOUR PAWS
Veterinary Wellness

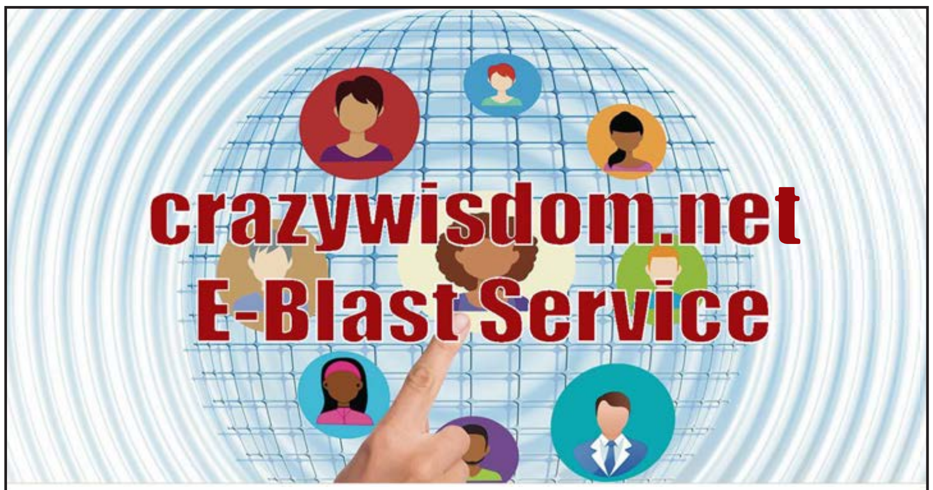
Monica Turenne, DVM, CVA, CT, CHPV

NOW OFFERING
TELEMEDICINE/VIRTUAL APPOINTMENTS
FOR BOTH HOLISTIC AND HOSPICE/PALLIATIVE CARE
FOR CURRENT AND NEW PATIENTS!
Please call for more information!

Dr. Monica is certified in palliative and hospice care for pets!
She is passionate about helping pets
and their families through this incredibly important journey.

- End-of-Life Consultations
- Hospice Care
- Natural Death Guidance
- In-Home Euthanasia Services
- Ozone Therapy
- Chinese Herbology
- Food Therapy
- Reiki
- Acupuncture for Dogs & Cats
- Wellness Examinations
- Illness Examinations
- Vaccination Guidance & Administration

FourPawsVetWellness.com
(734) 385-7161



Crazy Wisdom's E-Blast Service is a great way
to showcase yourself, your business and your services!
This service is a cost effective method of reaching
a targeted audience without the need for investment
in costly hardware and mail related software!

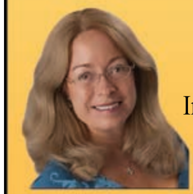
Send out a listing of your upcoming classes, workshops, and events.

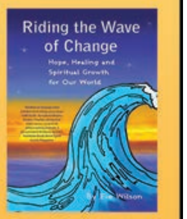
This is a great way to reach the more than 8000+ people
who are currently subscribed to receive our E-Blasts.

Affordable pricing $99.00 for any one email!

For all requirements and to pay
visit www.crazywisdom.net
Click on "Crazy Wisdom's Email Service"
in the left-side menu.

E-Blast Service ads must be mail-ready (see website) and emailed to Carol.
Questions? Contact Carol at carol@crazywisdom.net




Riding the Wave of Change
Hope, Healing and Spiritual Growth for Our World
Eve Wilson

Eve Wilson Bridge to Wholeness
Healing/Ascension Treatments & Classes

Spiritual healings with Eve for adults, children, couples, families, pets.
Healing body, emotion, mind, spirit and ascension, past, present and future.
Recommended by Doctors, Nurses, Chiropractors and Psychologists.

International
Award-Winning Blog:
The Weekly Word for
Healing & Ascension

Healing & Ascension Classes:

- Legal UCM Healer Practitioner Certification Enrolling Now
- Monthlies begin 4/28 for 6 amazing, skill-building, transformational experiences

Eve Wilson,
UCM Master Healer,
Intuitive Aura Reader,
Best-Selling Author,
Teacher

Riding the Wave of Change: Hope, Healing and Spiritual Growth for Our World

Read an excerpt and buy it now!
at EveWilson-RidingtheWave.com
also at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore

$10 off Treatments With This Ad

Treatments, Award Winning Blog, Book, Classes - spiritualhealers.com 734-780-7635

Wish you could find a book about
The Old Common Tarots of Europe?

That book exists. To learn about
The Tarot: A Strange and Wondrous Thing
visit: ArcanaPress.net

International Neighbors:

Sisters From All Around the World

Random Acts of Kindness

By Madeline Strong Diehl

When Eunkyun "Nana" Oh first joined International Neighbors (IN), an Ann Arbor-based nonprofit, in fall 2019, she knew she had finally found a way to feel like she belonged to the community. "It's difficult for foreigners when they first come here," she explained. "Especially for women who come here to support their husbands and children. Maybe in Korea they are important. But I talked to one Korean woman who said when she first came here, she thought to herself: "I am nothing here. I am like dust."

Nana is now one of thousands of women who have benefitted from the diverse programming and activities of IN, an organization started informally in 1958 by an Ann Arbor woman who became aware that an increasing number of foreign-born wives of students and professors were arriving in town and feeling isolated and alone. The group officially became a nonprofit in 1963, and any woman can join. As the group's website explains: "The women who participate in International Neighbors are called Newcomers or Neighbors. Newcomers are women from other countries who are new to this area. If a Newcomer lives in the area for more than a few years, she automatically becomes a Neighbor and offers friendship and support to Newcomers."

> International Neighbors is an organization that was started informally in 1958 by an Ann Arbor woman who became aware that an increasing number of foreign-born wives of students and professors were arriving in town and feeling isolated and alone.

When I first met Nana last fall, I could tell immediately that she is the kind of person who jumps into everything with great enthusiasm, and that has been true for her involvement with IN since she joined. We met on a beautiful day at Yoon's Korean bakery and Nana drank boba, or "bubble tea," a drink that originated in Taiwan. It's made with black tea, milk, ice, and tapioca pearls that sink down to the bottom of the glass. Nana was wearing black jeans, a black and white striped top, and tennis shoes. When I asked her where I could find the best boba in town, she replied: "Well, now that I've tried this place, this is my new favorite!" She explained that all Koreans in college must become fluent in English and choose an English name to use during lessons in English classes. She took the name "Nana" because it is a simple and easy to pronounce form of "Nanna," the name of the main character from a Korean fairy tale for adults. "In Korean, the name 'Nanna' means I am who I am," Nana explained. "But I never would have chosen 'Nana' if I had known that it meant 'grandmother' in English!"

When Nana joined IN in fall 2019, she says she loved singing in the music group and participating in the book discussion group with women from all around the world. Unfortunately, Nana was only able to participate in person for about six months before the pandemic hit in March 2020. Because of the pandemic, she also hasn't been able to see her family in Korea since she said goodbye to them at the airport when she boarded a plane in March 2019 to move to the U.S.—and Ann Arbor—permanently.

Nana had already lived in Ann Arbor for two years beginning in fall 2013 after receiving a full scholarship from her government to study in a master's degree program at Eastern Michigan University. She came as the single mother of a thirteen-year-old son. She already had fourteen years of experience teaching English to middle and high school students in Korea, and the scholarship provided her with an opportunity to learn how to use theater and drama to engage students in a more compelling way.

Once she completed her master's, Nana was obligated to return to Korea and teach for at least four years there. But by then her life had gotten more complicated because she had fallen in love with an American named Dave. "We met at a bowling alley," she laughs as she relates the love story that took many twists and turns before Nana and Dave finally ended up getting married in Hawaii in February 2016—about two and a half years after they met at a 2013 Meet-Up Halloween event.

During their courtship, after Nana returned to Korea in February 2015 to fulfill her teaching obligation there, she and Dave flew back and forth between the United States and Korea a total of sixteen times in four years before Nana was able to return to the U.S. for good. "We just threw money into the sky so that we could see each other," Nana said.

> Nana had already lived in Ann Arbor for two years beginning in fall 2013 after receiving a full scholarship from her government to study in a master's degree program at Eastern Michigan University. She came as the single mother of a thirteen-year-old son.

Once Nana joined IN in the fall of 2019 the members of her music group stayed in touch through the pandemic by walking together and exchanging emails. In fall 2020 Nana told Lisa, a close friend from the group, how much she missed her family because she could not fly to spend Chuseok with them—Korea's three-day celebration of the harvest. And one day during the holiday Nana was surprised when she came outside her door and found a beautiful potted plant from Lisa with a note that said: "Happy Thanksgiving!"

"I cried," said Nana. "It really made me feel like I belonged, like I was valued."

Now that Nana has been part of IN as a Newcomer for a couple of years, she says she thinks it's time for her to give back and become a Neighbor. Meanwhile she organizes two Meet-up groups independently: one for Korean and English-speaking people to get together and learn about each other's language and culture, and a second group for fans of the boy band BTS. (When I asked her what BTS was, she clutched her heart and said: "You don't know BTS? You have to see them!")

> Once Nana joined IN in the fall of 2019 the members of her music group stayed in touch through the pandemic by walking together and exchanging emails.

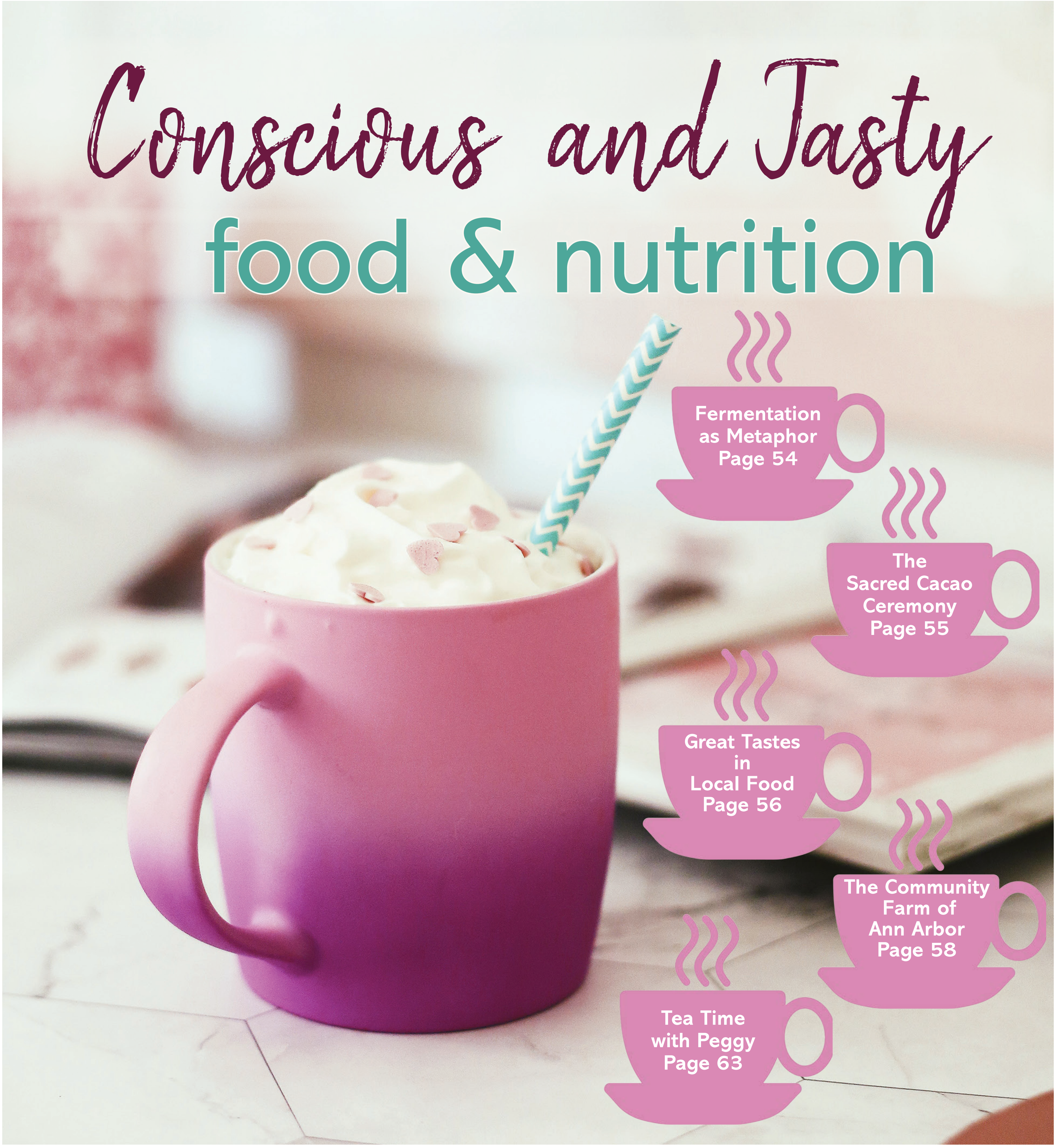
Nana says that when she came to the U.S. eight years ago, she never could have imagined or planned all the wonderful things that have happened to her and her son here. "Our life doesn't go as we plan," she said. "I just wanted my life to flow like a river, and here I am."

During the pandemic, the IN advanced book club created a thirty-minute creative video book called "The Adventures of Ariel." It was produced by Nana as well as a collective of seven other women who hail from Brazil, China, India, and the U.S.A. You can watch the video here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAf0cnsvPyQ

The book's dedication: "To the great sisterhood of all women all over the world who desire to live in friendship and peace."

Conscious and Tasty

food & nutrition



Fermentation as Metaphor Page 54

The Sacred Cacao Ceremony Page 55

Great Tastes in Local Food Page 56

The Community Farm of Ann Arbor Page 58

Tea Time with Peggy Page 63

Stay Informed! **SUBSCRIBE** TO OUR NEWSLETTERS

Receive our Weekly E-newsletter which features information about new books, audio books, tarot, and more!

Get emails when the latest issues of the CW Biweekly magazine and The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal are available.

Name

Email Address

scan QR code

to subscribe: scan the QR code, click here, or visit crazywisdom.net

You will also receive occasional emails, through us, from organizations, centers, and groups that sponsor the kinds of events, classes, and programs that you care about.

We will never sell or share your information!

deep local • ann arbor

coffee! it's what people want and need.

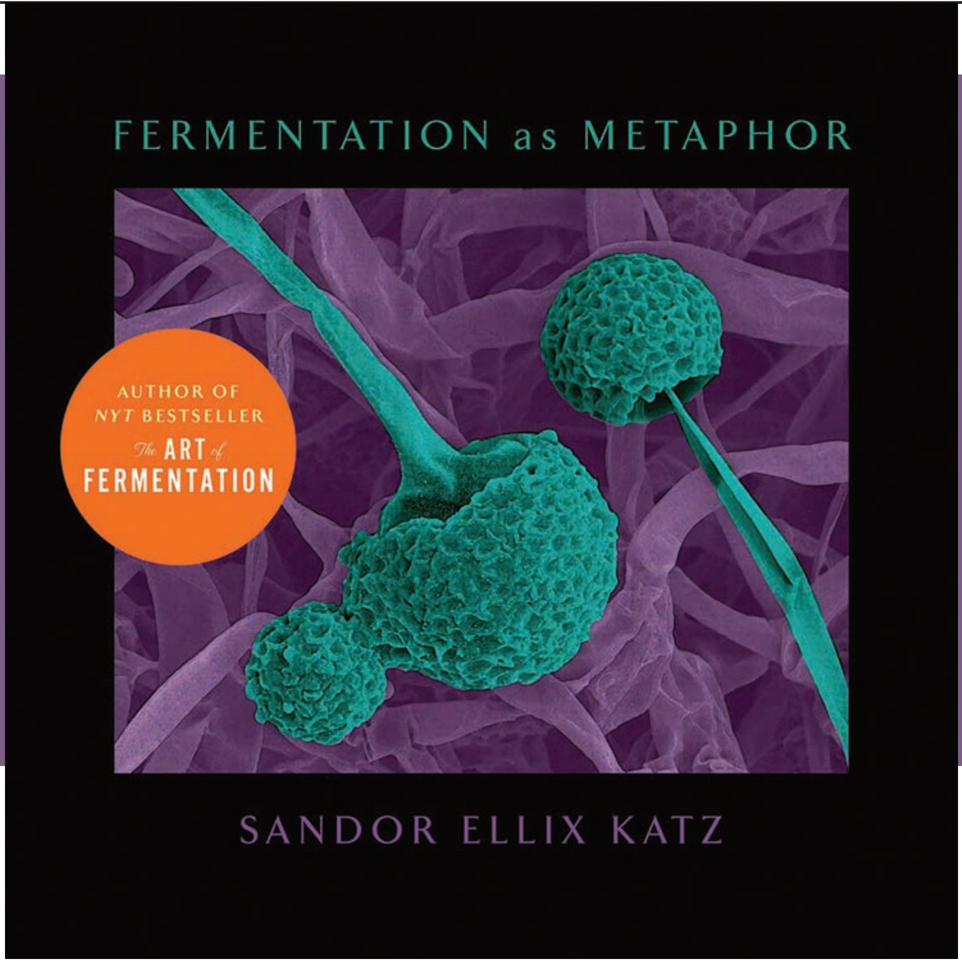
holiday bulk gift ordering now open

roosroast.com

gift cards available

734.222.9202

Book Review



FERMENTATION AS METAPHOR

By Sandor Ellix Katz

Book Review by Catherine Carlson

Would you have ever considered that lovely glass of wine, specifically the grapes that made it, may have a message for you? A message that goes beyond your health? Author Sandor Katz has. His most recent book, *Fermentation as Metaphor*, is a timely exploration of the subject of fermentation and how the fermentation process taking place with foods and beverages are analogous to what may be going on with us—as in society as a whole.

Katz loves fermented foods and has a handful going at any given time. He ferments yogurt and jun (related to kombucha), sourdough starters and kimchi, as well as sake and several country wines. His obsession with fermentation led to his authoring several books and becoming a well-known fermentation revivalist who travels and teaches throughout the world. Beyond just meaning *undergoing fermentation*, ferment, is defined as “to be in a state of agitation or intense activity.” Katz says this means anything in this excited or bubbly state is essentially fermenting. The versatility of this metaphor is impressive.

HIS MOST RECENT BOOK, *FERMENTATION AS METAPHOR*, IS A TIMELY EXPLORATION OF THE SUBJECT OF FERMENTATION AND HOW THE FERMENTATION PROCESS TAKING PLACE WITH FOODS AND BEVERAGES ARE ANALOGOUS TO WHAT MAY BE GOING ON WITH US—AS IN SOCIETY AS A WHOLE.

A primary reason for eating or drinking something fermented is because “Fermentation of foods and beverages breaks down nutrients into simpler, generally more accessible forms. It can also break down toxic compounds into harmless substances.” Reflectively, we witness fermentation in our daily lives as outdated structures, ideas, and systems eventually break down. It’s not the end though, something new always comes in its place and the cycle repeats.

One of the biggest metaphors Katz illustrates in the book is that of purity and contamination. He cites the “war on bacteria” as one example of a paradigm that is breaking down. The world we live in includes a variety of fungi, bacteria, viruses, and other organisms. Now more people are accepting fermented foods and beverages, and the bacteria they contain, are safe because fermentation is a self-protecting process. They are also recognizing fermentation contains a diversity of microbiology that helps to keep us healthy. Even Katz, who has lived with HIV for decades, grew to respect viruses as a necessary part of our existence. Similarly, the diversity of organisms large and small are what help us all co-exist together.

ONE OF THE BIGGEST METAPHORS KATZ ILLUSTRATES IN THE BOOK IS THAT OF PURITY AND CONTAMINATION. HE CITES THE “WAR ON BACTERIA” AS ONE EXAMPLE OF A PARADIGM THAT IS BREAKING DOWN.

The myth of purity permeates fermentation. Katz says nothing can ever be pure, despite all of our efforts. He offers that even “pure” gold is 99.9% pure. He expounds upon this notion and the irrational fears we may have around many types of things (or people) that may be considered impure. For example—young children exploring with their hands and mouths may cause adults to become fearful that the kids will ingest something that is harmful. When really, Katz says, this type of exposure is important to our immune systems. He says, “If purity means a state devoid of contamination, that is pure fantasy.”

AS AN OFFSHOOT OF HIS LOVE OF FERMENTED FOODS AND BEVERAGES, KATZ ALSO ENJOYS PHOTOGRAPHING THEM SO HE CAN VIEW AND SHARE WITH OTHERS WHAT HE SEES AS BEAUTIFUL.

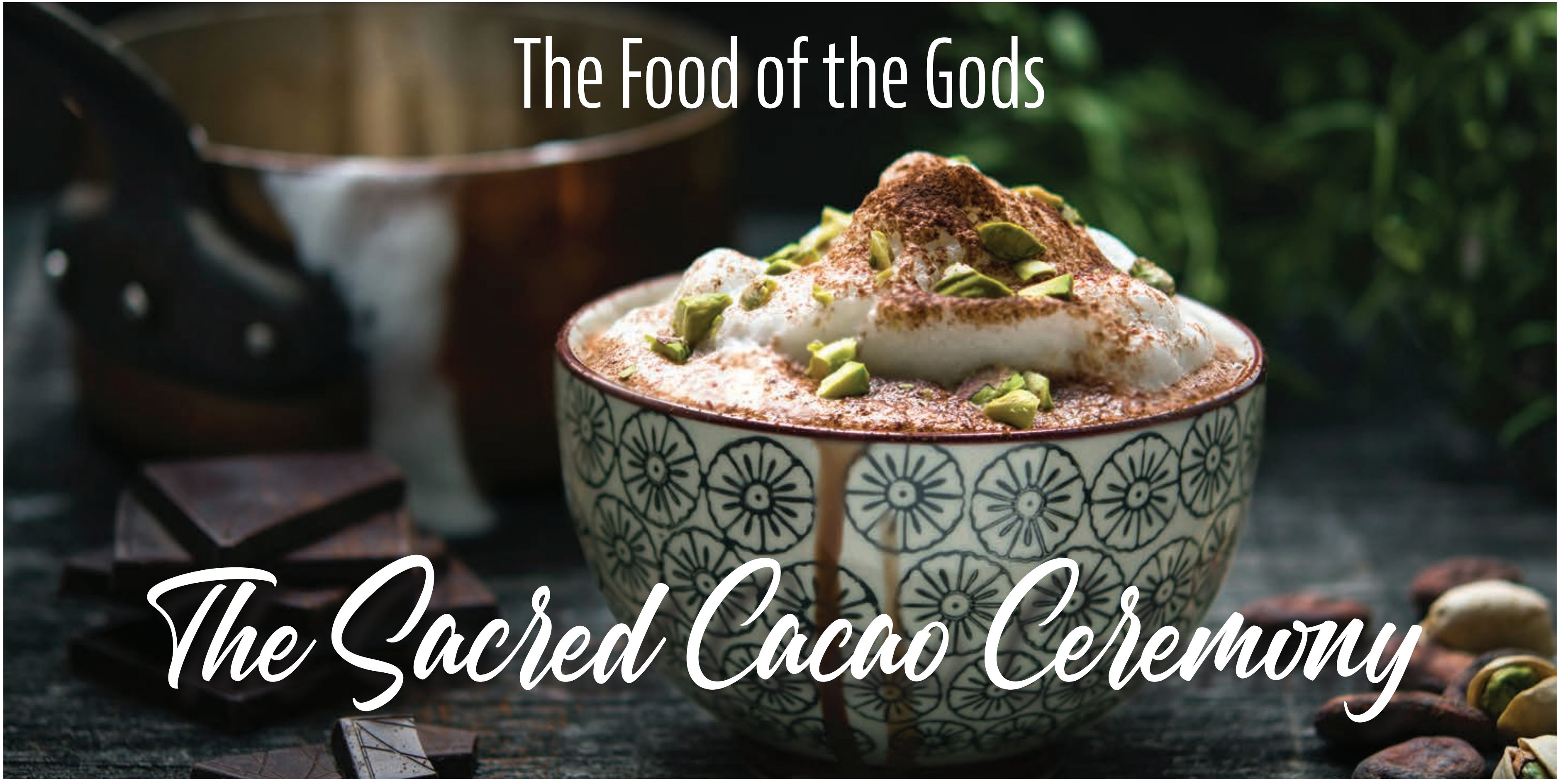
Another fantasy he speaks of is the desire to keep things inside a “perfect protective border.” In nature this is not the case. The seashore is a blend of earth and water, each blurring into the other. Fermented foods and beverages are designed to grow wild and uncontained with layers of different microbiology. Similarly, human beings, and the way we live, cannot exist in a nice and neat container. I can think of no better metaphor of this than the last two years. The longer we humans have been kept in a prescribed container, the more fermented we have become.

As an offshoot of his love of fermented foods and beverages, Katz also enjoys photographing them so he can view and share with others what he sees as beautiful. With access to specialized microscopes, he has been able to capture detailed pictures of anything from radish kraut to moldy cornbread. By colorizing them, they become brilliant, textured works of art. The book is filled with them.

I was not familiar with this subject before reading this book and I would say you don’t have to be interested in eating or drinking fermented foods to appreciate *Fermentation as Metaphor*. Katz effortlessly draws many parallels between the micro and the macro, between what we eat and who we are. Fermentation can be likened to acceptance and freedom. Miso is a mascot to the maverick. He says fermentation is not a trend but a part of life. Mutation is inevitable. Feeling bubbly or seeing bubbles both signal transformation—and that means anything is possible.

The Food of the Gods

The Sacred Cacao Ceremony



By Victoria Schon

Over 5,000 years ago, the cacao bean was first used by early Mesoamerican civilizations. It has been celebrated ever since as a sacred plant medicine in many indigenous cultures in South and Central America. Cacao (kə-ˈkau̇) known as the "food of the gods," is the seed found in the fruit of the Theobroma cacao tree, which is native to the Amazon basin.

A sacred cacao ceremony is a powerful community building ritual and has remained a staple in many cultures. Contemporary indigenous cultures in Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Costa Rica, have become the West's foundation of celebration and ritual as they share their knowledge and gifts of this potent sacred plant medicine. The intention of the ceremony is to uplift the communal disposition, restore individual vitality, facilitate a heart opening, re-connect to our intuition, and other personal spiritual desires.

> A sacred cacao ceremony is a powerful community building ritual and has remained a staple in many cultures.

Ceremonial cacao is a whole pure food made from cacao paste. Cacao paste is processed from a single ingredient–cacao beans. Once harvested, they are fermented, sundried, then ground down into the ceremonial paste that becomes solid at cooler temperatures. Nothing is removed or added during this process, which leaves the ceremonial cacao pure and potent. The cacao is then rehydrated and may be blended with herbs and spices to create a warm beverage to be consumed during the ceremony.

There are many health benefits and effects of consuming ceremonial-grade cacao. The cacao contains rich nutrients such as plant-based iron: 7.3mg per 100g; antioxidants—up to 40 times more antioxidants than blueberries; calcium; magnesium—a nutrient that's important for many processes in the body, including regulating muscle and nerve function, blood sugar levels, and blood pressure. It can also sharpen the mind while relaxing the body. Theobromine is a chemical that has a similar structure to caffeine, but the difference is that instead of being a nervous system stimulant like coffee, theobromine dilates the cardiovascular system, which results in an opening of the blood vessels, causing a sense of alertness and relaxation at the same time—a feeling of being awake and energized, while also simultaneously feeling relaxed, bringing balance clarity, and focus. Tryptophan teamed with magnesium supports the release of serotonin (that feel good molecule) in the brain. Consuming cacao contributes to our heart health, muscles, joint, and nervous system relaxation, and also supports the health of our brain. The cacao butter contains those healthy fats which are essential for our metabolism and cellular health.

> Consuming cacao contributes to our heart health, muscles, joint, and nervous system relaxation, and also supports the health of our brain.

Cacao contains anandamide, a neurotransmitter produced in the brain that binds to the THC receptors. It's also known as the "bliss molecule" (named after "ananda," the Sanskrit word for bliss). Anandamide is considered an endocannabinoid—a substance produced in the body that binds to cannabinoid receptors. As a plant medicine, cacao is known as a playful, gentle medicine that re-connects you to your own deep-rooted wisdom within. It also serves as an "ally tool" for connecting to the energetic space of your heart, as well as to people around you. As a participant in a sacred cacao ceremony, one can experience feelings of happiness, fortitude, and strength, as well as additional physical energy.

A sacred cacao ceremony or circle is led by an experienced facilitator—one who has worked with the plant medicine and has deep, intimate knowledge and connection with the spirit of the plant. The facilitator has an intuition and a "calling" to work with this particular medicine. Similarly, participants communicate they have a sense of being drawn to receive the plant medicine. In the ceremony, the participants are seated in a circle. It is essential that the space is prepared beforehand with song, intention, and smudging to create a sacred space. The facilitator prepares the cacao beverage beforehand with intention and is responsible for creating and holding a sacred space for the receivers throughout the ceremony. No two ceremonies are the same since the circle is representative of the individuals and their energy while participating, as well as the intuition and energy of the facilitator.

As a facilitator of sacred circles in Costa Rica and locally, I have had the privilege to sit in ceremonies with people from all walks of life. I begin by leading the circle in guided breathwork to help facilitate grounding and present-awareness. Oftentimes, I offer guided meditation to assist with creating an opening for the plant medicine to interact. I guide participants to approach the medicine with an open heart and mind and to set an intention individually or as a group. Music and sacred sound assist in guiding the heart-body-mind connection and opens up a space to receive the intelligence of the plant. A blessing, expressions of gratitude, and a dedication are presented to the spirit of the plant medicine before consuming the beverage.

> I consistently see participants experience a profound heart-opening, an elevated sense of self-love, and a deepening of their connection to their fellow receivers.

I consistently see participants experience a profound heart-opening, an elevated sense of self-love, and a deepening of their connection to their fellow receivers. Greater clarity, an enhanced sense of unconditional love for their family and friends, and forgiveness are also manifested. To love and be loved without judgement toward self or others is a profound freedom. The effects can be felt for a few days, but the transformation can last a lifetime. Before closing the ceremony, participants are given an opportunity to share about their experience, which builds a greater sense of community.

* * *

Victoria Schon is a holistic health coach and sacred sound journey facilitator and has been leading cacao ceremonies for four years. To learn more about participating in a sacred cacao ceremony, visit Victoria Schon online at victoriaschon.com/calendar-of-group-events.

GREAT TASTES in LOCAL FOOD

By Crysta Coburn
Photos by Susan Ayer

The Ebenezer

I watched in fascination as the bartender held what looked to me like a hot glue gun above the martini glass. A bubble filled with gray smoke formed at the gun's tip and grew to nearly the size of a baseball. The bubble joined with the pink liquid in the glass, forming a dome over the top.

"This one's yours," said the barman as he carefully slid the martini my way.

After marveling at the smoke held within the bubble, I slowly reached out my hand and tapped the bubble's surface with my forefinger. It popped, and the trapped smoke swirled and dispersed into the air. *Now that's a cocktail!*

Now that's a cocktail!

The Ebenezer is a cocktail lounge with a distinct speakeasy vibe located in downtown Plymouth. The entrance is not obvious, unless you know where to look. The address is on Fleet Street, which runs behind Main Street and serves as the backdoor to many of the businesses located on Main and Penniman. You will find the door to the Ebenezer nestled in the corner where Fleet Street makes a sharp turn to the northwest.

You enter into a dark hallway painted completely black and illuminated only by bare red light bulbs that lead you to the next door, also painted black, with an eye-shaped window. You have arrived.

Have a seat at the bar, where you can watch the cocktail magic happen, or grab a table, perhaps the one with the leather sofas on either side, or a wingback chair. The Ebenezer is all about having a low-key, cozy place to grab a drink and share some delicious small plate dishes with your friends or significant other. (If I were still in that scene, I would absolutely take a date here.)

Not having a reservation, my husband and I took a pair of seats at the bar where we bantered a bit with the bartenders and a few fellow patrons. The smoky cocktail that I ordered was called the Rose Martini. It tasted like raspberry limeade. I never tired of watching a few other Rose Martinis being made and recommended it to curious patrons who asked what I was drinking.

The small plates menu is extensive, with some usual favorites like spinach artichoke dip, wings, charcuterie board, and sliders. But there are also Ahi Tuna Crisps (crispy wonton skins topped with thinly sliced ahi tuna, jalapeno, avocado, and their signature soy sauce), shrimp and crab ceviche (served with crostini), truffle mac and cheese bites, and more. I tried the ceviche, finding it fresh and delicious, while my husband ordered the parmesan truffle french fries. The fries came with a little cup of ketchup and another cup of garlic aioli, which tasted *divine.*

In addition to the signature cocktails (including some tantalizing dessert cocktails), there is a good wine selection and mocktails for those who do not drink alcohol. If you would like a table, or are a large group, I strongly suggest making a reservation. You are bound to have a great time!

The Ebenezer is located at 305 Fleet Street in Plymouth. They are open Tuesday through Thursday from 4 p.m. to midnight, Friday and Saturday from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m., and closed on Sunday and Monday. For more information, visit theebenezerplymouth.com, email info@theebenezerplymouth.com, or call (734) 404-5552.

The Boro

Northeast of Ann Arbor proper is the mostly rural community of Dixboro. Most of us are probably familiar with the Dixboro General Store or the Humane Society of Huron Valley, both prominent features of the region. But there is something new to check out in Dixboro, the Boro.

The Boro is a restaurant venture with two components. The Boro to Go is an all-day take-out cafe with coffee, tea, and other hot beverage options; morning pastries as well as light lunch and dinner options; woodfired pizzas; desserts; and beverages-to-go (both alcoholic and non). The Boro Dining Room and Bar is their dine-in experience open for dinner that serves plates to share, such as giardiniera, oysters, focaccia, and prawns; entrees that include spaghetti, lobster, scallops, pork loin, duck, steaks, and hamburgers; woodfired pizzas; accompaniments like potato puffs and green beans with prosciutto vinaigrette; and a selection of cocktails, wine, and beer.

The very modern corrugated steel building incorporates a 140-year-old barn with the original stone fireplace. The outdoor deck offers beautiful views and the peaceful sounds of nature. Fleming Creek flows through the property, and the Boro's website promises that "if you come early for breakfast, you will be serenaded by the roosters from the yard next door."

Unfortunately, I am not an early riser, so there were no roosters for me. Because our lives have been busy lately, my husband and I decided to try the Boro To Go one day when we knew we would arrive home late and have no energy to cook dinner. Ordering through the website is easy, and when you click on a Lunch & Dinner or Pizza item, a list of allergens is included alongside Modifications and Special Instructions. You mark the boxes next to your dietary needs.

Because I ordered the Italian Meat and Cheese Sandwich and marked the box next to Wheat Allergy, the people preparing our dinner forewent the usual baguette and put the fixings on a bed of lettuce, which was so delicious that I think they need to add an Italian Meat and Cheese Salad to the menu. My husband thoroughly enjoyed his woodfired pineapple pizza with san marzano tomatoes, capocollo, smoked ham, and cheddar with a side of chili oil. The Wisco-Pops that we ordered for beverages left something to be desired. I should have gone with my instinct and ordered a Pumpkin Spice Latte with housemade syrup, but I didn't want the coffee to disrupt my sleep.

Because I ordered the Italian Meat and Cheese Sandwich and marked the box next to Wheat Allergy, the people preparing our dinner forewent the usual baguette and put the fixings on a bed of lettuce, which was so delicious that I think they need to add an Italian Meat and Cheese Salad to the menu.

The Boro seems to still be evolving and promises seasonal dishes from local sources. This a spot you will want to keep your eye on.

The Boro is located at 5400 Plymouth Road in Ann Arbor. The Boro To Go is open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day of the week. The Boro Dine-In is open from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday, closed on Monday and Tuesday. For more information, visit theborotogo.com, email info@thedixboroproject.com, or call (734) 669-3310.

MI Juice Garden

Do you like freshly pressed juice? Do you like acai bowls? If you answered yes to either of these questions, then you have got to stop by MI Juice Garden at the corner of Platt and Ellsworth in Ann Arbor. As soon as you step inside, you can smell the delicious fresh fruits in the air.

You can get your bowl and juice to go; there is even a refrigerator with bottles of pre-pressed juice if you are in a real hurry. There are also a few tables with chairs as well as some Adirondack chairs whose backs are shaped like the lower peninsula and a small table shaped like the U.P.

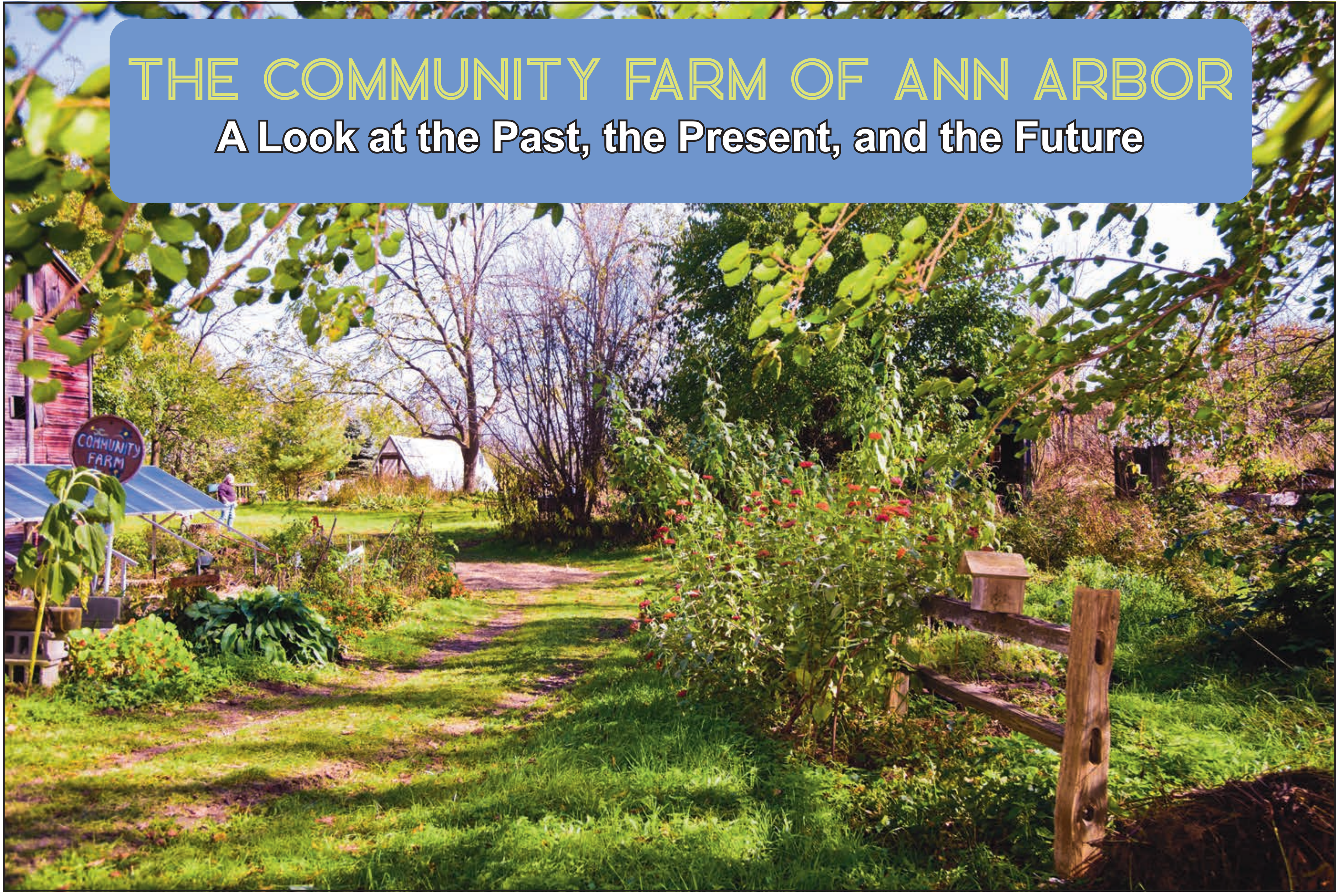
Because my husband and I stopped in during the fall, the specialty juice blends menu included themed juices like Dracula, which got its deep red color from beets. I ordered the Popeye, a sweeter option deriving much of its flavor from pomegranates, strawberries, and kiwis (it also has spinach and ginger). You don't have to stick to the signature blends, however. If you feel confident enough, you can choose your own blend of fruits, vegetables, greens, and spices.

The acai bowl can also be built to suit. Among the several toppings are strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, gluten-free granola, walnuts, chocolate chips, honey, and, for an extra dollar, peanut butter. It was incredibly tempting to order a bowl with everything, but I wasn't sure it would actually taste very good, and looking back, I am not sure it would have all fit in the bowl, there are that many options.

If you are looking for a healthy meal-to-go, you can, of course, order upon arrival, or you can log onto DoorDash and order for pick-up or delivery. DoorDash also lists salads, sandwiches, wraps, and more. What a fantastic addition to the south side's lunch-scape!

MI Juice Garden is located at 3980 Platt Road in Ann Arbor. They are open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, visit facebook.com/Mi-Juice-Garden-101762538450934 or call (734) 929-4836.

MI Juice Garden is a fantastic addition to the south side's lunch-scape!



THE COMMUNITY FARM OF ANN ARBOR

A Look at the Past, the Present, and the Future

By Sandor Slomovits
Photos by Mary Bortmas

The Community Farm of Ann Arbor was founded in 1988. It was one of the first organic, and perhaps the only biodynamic, farm in Michigan, as well as one of the first CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture). A few years after the Farm began, and up until three years ago, it was run by Annie Elder and Paul Bantle. After Annie and Paul moved to California in 2018, several other farmers ran things, and then this spring, Dan Gannon was hired to run the Farm.

To learn about that transitional period, the current state, and the future of the Farm, I spoke with Karen Chalmer, one of its founding members and someone who, in the past 33 years, has devoted countless hours of work, in many different capacities, at the Farm. She jokingly says, “My official role now is as the farm grandmother.” She still leads a weekly weed and sing, which is exactly what it sounds like.

I asked Karen for her farm memories from the past 33 years.
Karen: In the fall of 1987, the Ann Arbor Public Library held a panel discussion with farmers about the plight of small farms in America. Dale Lesser, who’s one of our neighbors was speaking, so I decided to go and listen. There were four or five farmers, and they all told the same story—they just couldn’t compete with the big factory farms. In order to do what they loved, somebody had to work off the farm to support the farm. Then a man named Trauger Groh from the Temple-Wilton Community in New Hampshire (the first CSA in the US) said, ‘You know, there’s another way to do this, it’s called community supported agriculture.’

I’d never heard of that, but Cindy Olivas and Marcia Barton—Cindy worked at Wildfire Bakery and Marcia at the Ecology Center—had studied biodynamic farming and wanted to start a CSA in Ann Arbor. ‘Was anybody interested?’ About ten of us said, ‘Yeah.’ We met that weekend at the Steiner School and in 1988 we started on borrowed land. I think there were 150 members that first year and we all got such lovely produce that everybody wanted to keep playing. But the farmer we were renting from was so amazed at the life on his farm that he decided he wanted to farm again. So, we moved to Huron River Drive where we were for two or three years, and Marcia and Cindy were still farming.

> WE HAD TO MOVE A COW AND A GREENHOUSE. (LAUGHTER) IT WAS LOTS OF FUN. THAT WAS A BIG LESSON, THAT THE FARM COULD SURVIVE AND THRIVE.
>
> —KAREN CHALMER

Then Cindy left. She was sort of the Annie of that first part of the Farm, had that kind of heart. Marcia was kind of the Paul, and we thought the farm couldn’t possibly survive, but then Marcia found Annie and Paul, and they came on with Marcia. Then we had to move the whole farm again and it was September and we thought, ‘Oh my gosh, how’s this going to work? We should be planting garlic for next year.’ And that week I got a call from Isabelle Yingling who said, ‘I’ve got this farm in Chelsea that my husband and I intended to farm, but we’ve had five kids and we’ve never farmed it. My husband’s gone now. Do you know anybody who’d like to farm it?” (Laughter)

So, we moved, and Annie and Paul started farming. We had to move a cow and a greenhouse. (Laughter) It was lots of fun. That was a big lesson, that the farm could survive and thrive. Annie and Paul became the farm and did wonderful things. They, created the community and the love… So, when they said they were leaving, it was like, ‘Oh, I know the farm can survive because I’ve seen this happen before.’

The Community Farm of Ann Arbor was founded in 1988. It was one of the first organic, and perhaps the only biodynamic, farm in Michigan, as well as one of the first CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture).

Margarete Walsh, Dan Gannon, and Karen Chalmer

We started looking and found three dear, sweet, delightful young people, one of whom had actually farmed before. They were wonderful, and they did their very best, but they also had an impossible task. They were strangers to each other and three is not a great number, somebody often gets left out. They gave it their best and then one of them left and two of them carried on the next year, but life called them off into completely different things. So, there we were in October 2019 with no farmers.

Earlier, in 2017 or so, Randy Wright and Lucia Ruedenberg had bought the house [on the farm] and they were so happy to have a biodynamic farm in their backyard. So, there we were in 2019 with Randy and Lucia and some remnant of us who really wanted there to be a farm. We'd done some soil testing and we knew that the soil needed a rest. So, we thought, 'Okay, we'll plant cover crops and look for a farmer. If we can just figure out how to pay the taxes and electricity, the insurance… we'll keep going.' There were 30 members who were willing to support it for a chrysalis [transitional] year.

> THAT MIGHT'VE BEEN THE MOST COMMUNITY YEAR OF THE ENTIRE FARM IN SOME WAYS, BECAUSE THERE WAS NOBODY IN CHARGE.
>
> —KAREN CHALMER

That might've been the most community year of the entire farm in some ways, because there was nobody in charge. It became so apparent that Annie and Paul had held all these different threads between them, and they tried their best to pass it on, but you don't even know what you didn't know until… So, we just kept putting our heads together and figuring things out. Then, Randy died of a heart attack one workday. That was a really traumatic thing. He and I had been the most intent on keeping the thing together. He was the only one that knew how to run the tractor. After he was gone, we had to get a bunch of people together to figure out how does this tractor work? How do you put equipment on it? Luckily there were some guys who knew a lot about that stuff, so we did it. We planted the cover crops, and we kept the farm going, but we still didn't have a farmer.

And then this wonderful thing happened. Margarete Walsh encouraged us to put a little paragraph into the *Journal for Anthroposophy*. It was way at the very end in tiny little print and it said "the Community Farm of Ann Arbor needs a farmer." Dan Gannon, a farmer out in California, saw it and was interested. We had interviewed maybe four or five people and there were some really great people, but nobody who really fit. But Dan did really fit, and I think the farm is a great fit for him.

Margarete Walsh and her family have been members of the Farm for about thirty years, but after she retired last year, she upped her commitment. She began regularly working at the Farm, joined the Farm's Board, and became a member of the chrysalis group, which is the educational arm of the Farm.

Margarete: Last year, because of the pandemic, I think everybody was looking for community and Karen put the call out, [asking] who of the former members would be interested in having a workday to come to the farm and take care of the many, many tasks that have been not done for a while.

> OFTEN, AGAIN AND AGAIN, I FEEL HEALTHIER, HAPPIER, MORE IN BALANCE, JUST HAVING GREATER EQUANIMITY, AFTER I'VE BEEN AT THE FARM FOR AN HOUR.
>
> —MARGARETE WALSH

San: It's almost a silver lining of the pandemic that the community came together, that something good has come out of it.

Margarete: We definitely called it a silver lining. People came who, I don't know how they found out, but they saw an opportunity to be cooperative with other, similar-minded people. We were outside, we kept our distance, we wore masks when we were inside cleaning up the barn or whatever. It was lots of laughter, some singing with masks. (Laughter) I think it really fulfilled a need. And it was an open, inviting gesture to enter into the community.

THE COMMUNITY FARM OF ANN ARBOR

A Look at the Past, the Present, and the Future

> I THINK THE COMMUNITY ITSELF WENT THROUGH MORE OF A TRANSITION THAN THE FARM DID IN THE SENSE THAT THERE WAS A LOSS FROM WHAT THEY'D KNOWN AND WHAT THEY'D GOTTEN COMFORTABLE WITH. AND A LITTLE BIT OF AN EXPECTATION OF, 'HOW DO WE GET BACK TO THAT' RATHER THAN 'HOW DO WE GO FORWARD FROM HERE?'
>
> —DAN GANNON

There are many, many reasons why people come. Of course, certainly for the vegetables, but it's more than that. Often, again and again, I feel healthier, happier, more in balance, just having greater equanimity, after I've been at the farm for an hour.

There was this absolute determination to keep going and also to create a new vision. We, in any particular time in our lives, act according to what we know. And that's exactly what Annie and Paul did, they did the best they knew how to do. I'm really full of admiration to this day for all that they gave on many, many different levels.

#

Finally, in early July I interviewed Dan Gannon, the Community Farm's new farmer. Along with his 13-year-old daughter, Frankie, he moved to the Farm in August of 2020. Dan, 41, is a solidly built six-footer with a full, scraggly black and grey beard and a vigorous way of speaking. He wore a blue ballcap, heavy boots, and tan overalls.

San: How did you come to farming? Is it something that you grew up with, or came to later in life?

Dan: It was in college, in a student organic community garden at University of California Berkeley. That was the first time I ever had the experience of gardening or growing food. I was studying microbiology, and one day the professor said, 'You guys are the smartest folks at the school. You'll never have to worry about a job. You can either work in human waste, processing human waste, or lab research.' I thought, 'Wait a minute, I'm not interested in any of those things.' At the same time, I happened to be taking a student-run class in the student organic community garden and saw a practical application for microbiology, compost, disease suppression, and nutrient cycling in the soil. But more importantly than that was also having the experience for the first time of working together with a community of people in the garden.

San: When was this?

Dan: Twenty years ago, now, in about 2001.

San: What was next?

Dan: I had a no-till farm that was the first small farm in West Sacramento, in California. The city was trying to find creative ways of making use of empty land, city lots, and small properties. There was a good community of people trying to initiate a local food system. I started a program working with other new farmers and we had a little online farm stand that we collaborated on. I was always trying to find ways of working with other people, essentially working with the community. If it was just farming for myself it wouldn't be nearly as satisfying.

San: So, what brought you here to Michigan?

Dan: It was this particular farm. I saw an advertisement that they needed a farmer. It seemed pretty appealing to be able to come here and step into something that had been in operation for 30 years using a similar model to what I was already using.

San: What is different now at the Community Farm than when Paul and Annie were farming?

Dan: I don't know too much about the transition years, not having been here, but I think what's still unique about this CSA, compared to others in the area, is that it's really exclusively a CSA. You know, occasionally, if I've got a whole field of tomatoes, I'll probably end up having a few extra tomatoes that I sell off, but principally it's designed around the membership as being the primary, if not exclusive, revenue source.

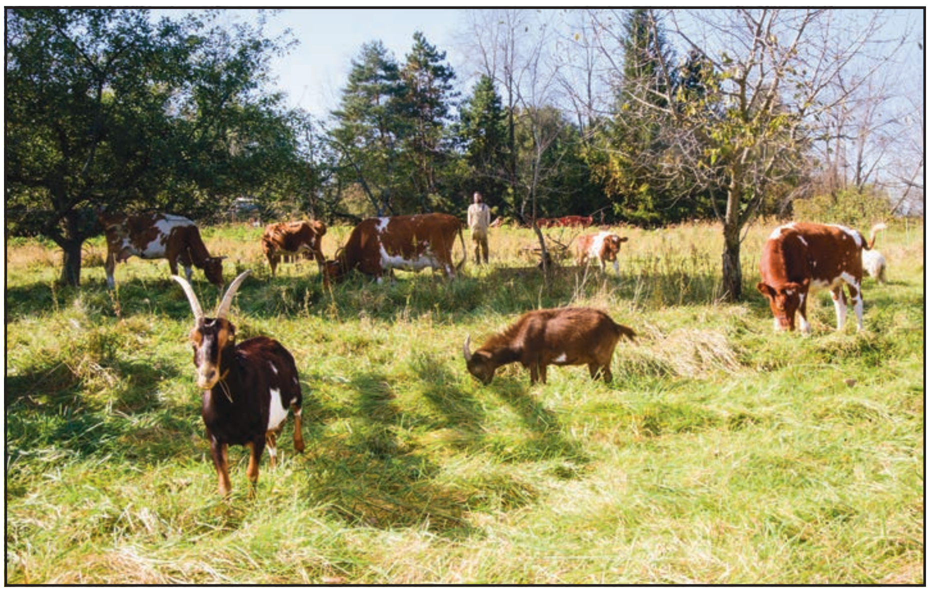
San: You don't, for example, go to the farmers market, right?

Dan: That's correct. The farm produce proper is really centered on the CSA members.

San: And that's how it is still.

Dan: Yeah. I think the community itself went through more of a transition than the farm did in the sense that there was a loss from what they'd known and what they'd gotten comfortable with. And a little bit of an expectation of, 'How do we get back to that' rather than 'how do we go forward from here?' Last year there was no farmer, and I think that was a really critical experience because what people found was that when there was more direct responsibility for the care of the land—because there were still two dozen or so members who split the costs to maintain the land, and also had to put in work to do it—they found that actually it was, surprisingly, much more satisfying to feel a more direct sense of responsibility for the space, rather than just to come and pick up your produce and then leave again. That to me is really the exciting part of this, people working together, being together, forming bonds that way. I think that's kind of what we're building on going forward in terms of what's similar or what has carried through. And then certainly the production is different. We're no till completely.

> OCCASIONALLY, IF I'VE GOT A WHOLE FIELD OF TOMATOES, I'LL PROBABLY END UP HAVING A FEW EXTRA TOMATOES THAT I SELL OFF, BUT PRINCIPALLY IT'S DESIGNED AROUND THE MEMBERSHIP AS BEING THE PRIMARY, IF NOT EXCLUSIVE, REVENUE SOURCE.
>
> —DAN GANNON



San: That's a change?

Dan: That's a big change. I think that the land was overly tilled until now. That was part of the system for providing as much produce, importing a fair amount of manure to make compost and then really working the fields heavily. That's pretty common for organic farms, that the farm is sort of a pass through; you're bringing in imports and you're exporting off produce. But what you find is that little by little it's exhausting the capacity of the soil to sustain life, not just in a nutrient way, nutrients are relatively easy to replace. If I take off some amount of produce I have to put on some amount of fertilizer. Okay. But it's the soil organic matter that people don't often think about, but that's really what's the primary food source for all the microbes that are in the soil, which are doing all the work to take care of your plants for you. So, this idea of feed the soil and the soil takes care of the plants, in effect it's really the microbes that are in the soil, bacteria and fungus and everything, that they build upon. So, a no till system doesn't undermine that each year. It lets that community of workers in the soil build over time and become more resilient. And then they lend that resilience to the system above ground.
San: Say more about that.

I WAS INVITED HERE WITH THE COMMITTEE ALREADY RECOGNIZING THAT THEY WERE ASKING FOR NO TILL AND RECOGNIZING THAT THEY HAD BEEN THE PIONEERS OF CSA THIRTY YEARS AGO AND THAT THERE WAS A NEED AGAIN TO TAKE A NEW LOOK AND SEE WHAT'S THE LEADING EDGE.

—DAN GANNON

Dan: In essence the idea is not to disturb the soil community. A lot of people talk about a community of the wildlife and the native plants and other things above ground. But, in any given system, the majority of the biomass is microbial, we don't see them. They have this really large influence on all the life that we do see. So, if you can keep them intact, they're like the world's best little chemists. They multiply so fast that they adapt really quickly and the waste of one is food for the next. It's this really tight knit community. There's no waste. That means that nutrients get cycled right there in the root zone rather than getting washed away or lost to the atmosphere. And disease suppression; there's no room for disease to come in because there's so much tight-knit life there.

This farm is a biodynamic farm, and the ideal of a biodynamic farm is to treat the farm itself as a living organism. If you have to bring in fertility from offsite, it should be considered as a temporary situation, like a medicine, or a remedy for something that's missing. The ideal is to balance the resources that you have onsite to be able to provide the fertility to the fields. Historically, of the ten acres of land, they've farmed close to four or even five acres. This year we're down to an acre and a half and the rest of that space supports the fields.

San: How do the other eight plus acres do that?

Dan: A lot of it is integrating animals into the system. Then you are producing the right amount of manure onsite yourself, rather than getting manure from the dairy down the road and making compost from plants. Then also, a third of our land is really kind of just wild. Again, here's this resiliency that comes from having a connection to some wild spaces. Over time people have come to recognize that, 'oh

A LOT OF PEOPLE TALK ABOUT A COMMUNITY OF THE WILDLIFE AND THE NATIVE PLANTS AND OTHER THINGS ABOVE GROUND. BUT, IN ANY GIVEN SYSTEM, THE MAJORITY OF THE BIOMASS IS MICROBIAL. WE DON'T SEE THEM. THEY HAVE THIS REALLY LARGE INFLUENCE ON ALL THE LIFE THAT WE DO SEE.

—DAN GANNON

For questions call:
734-222-1491

FOR CHRONIC ILLNESS, CANCER, OR WELLNESS
Life Force Intensive Session

Regain your health with two weeks of anthroposophic medical care, therapies, and nutrition in Ann Arbor.

Next Session:
February 21st - March 5th

Start your registration at
steinerhealth.org

Karlta Zarley, RN, CHTP
Certified Healing Touch Practitioner

- Healing Touch Energy Work
- Multidimensional, Intuitive and Transformational Healing
- Spiritual Direction
- Neuro-Sensitives and those on the Autistic Spectrum
- Essential Oils Consults
- Flower Essence Master Formulas
- Workshop & Retreat Facilitator

210 Little Lake Drive, Suite 7, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
734.761.5908 • karlta@karltazarley.com

"What you are seeking is seeking you." Rumi

Are you craving to cultivate spiritual nourishment?
Are you longing for a spiritually sacred space to de-stress?
Do you desire to meet new friends and become a part of a like minded community?
Visit our website calendar for upcoming events
Lighthousecenterinc.org
Weekly Meditations. Sunday Gatherings
Spiritual workshops, "Lighthouse Listening Room" music concerts,
Vegan Potluck gatherings, movie nights, Kirtans.
Raja Yoga (Pathway to Kriya yoga) via Ananda Michigan

The Lighthouse Center, Inc.
740 East Shore Drive
Whitmore Lake Mi

lighthousecenterinc.org

THE COMMUNITY FARM OF ANN ARBOR

A Look at the Past, the Present, and the Future

yeah, we really benefit from having this order that we need from our cultivated areas being at the edge of where there's the strength and resilience of wild nature. That's it in a nutshell, the idea is to slightly lower productivity in terms of the productive space.

San: What does that mean in terms of work? How much more or less people hours will it take to farm this way? And is that even a good question to ask?

> THE ANIMALS DO A LOT OF THE LAND MANAGEMENT. IN A WAY THEY'RE THE WORKERS THAT ARE CLEARING THE LAND. WE GET THE BENEFIT OF THEIR MANURE, BUT ALSO THEIR ACTIVITY ITSELF ON THE LAND OPENS UP THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOMETHING NEW. THINGS DON'T GET TOO THICK AND ESTABLISHED.
>
> —DAN GANNON

Dan: The kind of work is different, it's not so much that it's more or less work. My introduction to growing food was in that community garden when I was in school. I changed my major from molecular environmental biology to an interdisciplinary major that I made up called agroecology or agricultural ecology. I was getting a variety of alternative forms of farming through my academic studies, and I was practicing very small-scale farming. Coming out of that, my intention was to identify what's the smallest scale that we can farm in order to be responsible about every decision that we're making: what's good for humanity on the earth in general, not just what's good for me in the pocketbook this year. It means less land, essentially. In order to be that careful, you can't really be so widespread.

San: I drove by some big corn fields on my way here.

Dan: Yeah. That was my intention, to say, 'Okay, we need this balance between making a living—obviously we all live in this economic system—and yet, if that's the sole determinant, then you're never really making decisions about what's best. You're always settling for whatever you can do to pay the bills.

I think it's mostly a question of identifying that [profit] is not really the primary criteria. Even though this farm was biodynamic and organic, they were still conventionally tilling. And that's typical for most farms that are trying to do it at some scale. They've identified what they need in order to be profitable. This is an inconvenient way of farming for sure. And it's not even just the no till part, because that could be done on a large scale, you could still do it where you're just importing truckloads of manure or compost. It's instead inconvenient because we're trying to make use of these really intimate relationships between the land itself, the animals that are here, the plants that are here, and the microbes that are here, these really rich relationships. To me, that fits really well with the community supported model, because that's all about rich relationships, getting to know each other over time, and working through good and bad years together. I think it's kind of the only natural way.

I was invited here with the committee already recognizing that they were asking for no till and recognizing that they had been the pioneers of CSA thirty years ago and that there was a need again to take a new look and see what's the leading edge. What is it that we can keep doing to go forward rather than just settling into this system that started 30 years ago?

Elizabeth Sullivan
Certified Vedic Astrologer

Vedic Astrology
with Elizabeth Sullivan

Natal Chart Reading
Annual Follow Up
Relationship Analysis
Prashna (Question Chart)

Each person is born at the exact moment when the stars align with their destiny.

Your natal horoscope is uniquely yours.
It is the blueprint of your personal karma, serving as a divine roadmap to help guide you as you progress along your life's journey.

Facebook: **@astrologerelizabeth**
734.971.2131
astrologer-elizabeth.com
astrologerelizabeth@gmail.com

Thanks for a great season – from Frog Holler Farm and the King Family
See you in the spring!

And thank you to the Crazy Wisdom Bookstore for 40 years of growing consciousness. May the seeds you have planted continue to bear fruit!

Cathy, Billy, Kenny and Edwin King
Front: Emily Foley
Photo: Mary Bortmas (Unforgettable Photos)

To stay in touch visit froghollerorganic.com

San: You mentioned more animals…

Dan: What's here now is not what I would like to have, that's for sure. We're about to buy cows, we'll have four cows to start. I've got seven goats and sheep now and chickens. We'll need a fair amount more, but it's not so much about the numbers. What I'm aiming for is to have as many animals as we can feed ourselves on the land.

The animals do a lot of the land management, in a way they're the workers that are clearing the land. We get the benefit of their manure, but also their activity itself on the land opens up the opportunities for something new, things don't get too thick and established. I think that it's really critical to bring animal husbandry and crop farming back together again. Out of convenience, the organic farmers I know that started 30, 40 years ago, they right away said, 'We can't do both because it's just too difficult, so we're going to eliminate the animals.' Here in the spring, I brought them [the animals] through, and they ate down our cover crop in each of the fields. We've got a few beds where the goats and the sheep are right now that we prepped in the spring but never planted. So, the weeds are this tall by now, and I can just turn them [the goats] into a few beds at a time. It's more about the work [the animals] do and managing their activity so that it fits into the system and relieves us of some labor. I have to spend a little extra time with the animals, moving their temporary fencing and things like that, but they do better work at weeding and clearing a space than what I could do. Plus, they do it just for room and board. (Laughter) The animals get to be animals, they get to move around, they get to exhibit all their instinctive activity. And we get the benefit of their work.

San: If you don't till, how do you plant?

Dan: A lot of folks still want the convenience of a clean bed on the surface. So, some of the implements came to use what's called vertical tillage rather than turning the soil up. Think of the implement just being turned 90 degrees and the tips of it are all that ever enters the soil. There's a history here of some innovative practices, making and adapting tools. We've been doing the same. We've made a thing that's a bunch of disks that basically just cuts into the surface of the soil shallowly without turning the soil. Then that little bit of disturbance gives us the chance to clean up the surface of the soil enough that we can still use push seeders, or any of the convenient types of seeding.

San: Is this about the size of the farm that you want it to be?

Dan: That's a good question. I think that the better model going forward is not limited to a vegetable CSA. I think that part of it becomes limiting where then there's this pressure to grow more vegetables because that's what we're selling. The kind of activity that I've been describing, it's not exactly even accurate to say there's less productivity. There's less vegetable field space, but there's an abundance of activity of all kinds. It's more a question of diversification in terms of the products. There are animal products, there's plenty of vegetables coming out of the fields, but there's also a variety of medicinal plants and other kinds of plants that are going on all around.

What we're looking at now is not just what does it take to get produce out of the fields, but instead, what does it take to take care of a piece of land in such a way that we get something in return in the form of produce? In this case we're saying, we value taking care of the land and each other in a different way.

"WE'VE HAD OUR CHRYSALIS YEAR, AND THIS IS THE LEARNING-HOW-TO-FLY YEAR."

—KAREN CHALMER

Karen Chalmer offered a summation of the Farm's history, present, and future when she said, "We've had our chrysalis year, and this is the learning-how-to-fly year. There's going to be a lot of learning. Thirty years of Annie and Paul was pretty darn wonderful. And yet we know things now that they didn't know. I learned this great song just the week before all of this came down, (Sings) "You do the best you can until you know, better. And when you know better, do better." So, we're trying to learn to do better.

TEA TIME WITH PEGGY

Think Spring! Think White Tea

By Peggy A. Alaniz

I admit it, winter is not my favorite season. Now, don't get me wrong, I think it's pretty in December and part of January, but by February I am over it. I want spring. I want to plant pretty flowers and watch the new leaves come out on the trees. It's also white tea season.

Legend has it that tea was first discovered in 2727 B.C. when the Chinese Emperor, Shen Nung, sat under a tea tree and some leaves fell into his cup of hot water. I sincerely believe that this discovery occurred in the spring when some of the new young buds and leaves fell from the camellia sinensis plant. White tea is after all referred to as emperor's tea. It is also the least processed of the true teas.

White tea is made of new young leaves and buds. It is only harvested for a few weeks in the early spring. It is called white tea because it is dried instead of rolled, crushed, or oxidized. It also contains the highest amounts of caffeine and antioxidants. Drinking a daily cup of white tea has been attributed to improved cholesterol, improved overall heart health, as well as aiding in weight loss.

The only way to describe the flavor of white tea is pleasant and refreshing. It pairs well with light fruit flavors such as apricot or peach, possibly even apple. You would want to avoid sharp citrus flavors because the delicate flavor of the tea would be lost. The tea steeps quickly, even in loose leaf form, and can even steep in cold water. If you are not typically a tea drinker, you should try it at least once! White tea is smooth in taste with no bitter notes to it.

Traditionally there are five types of white tea. They are:

- Bai Hao Yin Zhen or silver needle
- Bai Mu Dan or white peony
- Gongmei or Tribute Eyebrow
- Shou Mei or Noble long-life eyebrow
- Dai Bai Cha

Silver needle is the most expensive and is composed of only the buds. White peony is a combination of the bud and the top two leaves. Tribute Eyebrow is a lower grade of white tea made from the young leaves. Noble Long-Life Eyebrow is a combination of both the buds and leaves. However, it is harvested much later than silver needle and is slightly oxidized. Dai Bai Cha is white tea that has been withered, slightly dried, and rolled. This tea also tends to be greener in color.

My suggestion is to try the silver needle or the white peony to have the most refined experience with the least amount of processing. They are both beautiful teas that you can find a truly Zen moment with.

For an alternative to drinking it hot, I would suggest an iced white tea fuzzy.

Iced White Tea fuzzy

1 cup of white tea

½ cup of ice

½ shot of peach liqueur so as not to overpower the white tea. For a non-alcohol version use peach juice.

Drink and enjoy!

Peggy Alaniz is a graduate of The Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at Naropa University of Boulder, Colorado. She has taught Writing at Jackson and Baker College. While attending Naropa University she worked at Celestial Seasonings Tea company. In her free time, she writes poetry, studies reiki, and karate. A lifelong tea enthusiast she continues to study tea, herbs, and tisanes.

Bringing Nature Back to Our Yard:

TRADING IN HARMFUL LANDSCAPING HABITS FOR HEALTHY SUSTAINABILITY

By Rosina Newton

Late winter is the time we may start dreaming about the color green, about flowers, imagining new vistas as we look out our windows or walk around our frozen yard. This is a wonderful time to explore a fresh outlook on our little piece of earth. As new life emerges from dormancy, we may ask ourselves, "What is the purpose of my yard?" There are many possible answers: enjoying beauty and colorful flowers, complying with homeowners' association regulations, conforming to the neighborhood, impressing neighbors and friends, creating a safe space for the kids to play, or wanting to help save our planet.

The good news is, almost all of these goals can be accomplished in a way that helps save our planet. Unfortunately, "to save our planet" has not been the driving force behind the horticulture industry for as long as I have been involved—over 35 years. Ever since the front yard married the industrial revolution, the design template has been pristine, monoculture lawns, cookie-cutter landscapes, and chemical maintenance. As it turns out, these three very common components of home landscaping contribute to human illness, species extinction, and our climate crisis.

My dear fellow stewards of the home landscape, we will briefly explore how our landscapes might contribute to such negative outcomes. Please bear with me through the bad news until we get to more of the good news.

The good news comes from the six individuals I interviewed who are actively involved in positive landscaping alternatives. I share with excitement and respect these companies and organizations that are designing, installing, and maintaining healthier outdoor spaces that also create more beauty, vitality, and joy in our lives. The work they are doing is literally healing our planet, one space at a time. They generously shared their wisdom and recommendations—from easy do-it-yourself steps to complete renovation, with lots of options in between.

THIS IS A WONDERFUL TIME TO EXPLORE A FRESH OUTLOOK ON OUR LITTLE PIECE OF EARTH.

But first, what exactly is wrong with a pristine lawn, and what is a monoculture anyway? You're not alone if these ideas seem foreign to you. The majority of landscapes, advertisements, and gardening education surrounding us promote one kind of landscape, especially in the front yard: a uniform green lawn dotted with shade trees, some pattern of well-behaved shrubs, and shelves of products to maintain this design.

The perfect lawn can even be considered a status symbol. One local lawn care specialist told me, "It's very competitive, keeping up with the Joneses." Turf is expected to be a uniform expanse of one species —or a perfectly curated blend—of grasses. No clover, no flowers, and certainly no "weeds" are allowed. Think of a cornfield. That is another example of a monoculture.

But monocultures do not exist in nature. Lawn is an artificial design feature, and we have 40 million acres of it in the US. In *The Lawn: A History of an American Obsession*, Virginia Scott Jenkins writes:

> The domestic front lawn is a typically American landscape feature. ...The first attempts at lawns in America were made by wealthy landowners in the late eighteenth century, people who learned of the new English landscape fashion through books, English indentured gardeners, and travel.

From the late 1700s to 2022 is a long time to adhere to a single fashion. Yes, men's fashion at one time included stockings and powdered wigs. Yes, women used to wear pointy bras. Olive green and harvest gold used to be the fashionable color in our home furnishings. But creative ideas are never meant to be cemented permanently into our cultural environment.

EVER SINCE THE FRONT YARD MARRIED THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, THE DESIGN TEMPLATE HAS BEEN PRISTINE, MONOCULTURE LAWNS, COOKIE-CUTTER LANDSCAPES, AND CHEMICAL MAINTENANCE. AS IT TURNS OUT, THESE THREE VERY COMMON COMPONENTS OF HOME LANDSCAPING CONTRIBUTE TO HUMAN ILLNESS, SPECIES EXTINCTION, AND OUR CLIMATE CRISIS.

A September 2020 article in *Gardens Illustrated* entitled "A History of Lawns" explains:

> The climate in much of the USA is poorly adapted to lawn culture – nevertheless an increasingly uncompromising lawn aesthetic was vigorously pursued throughout the 20th century. The establishment and maintenance of lawns was conceived and enacted as a war against nature. Extraordinary excesses in the consumption of chemicals and water use were encouraged in pursuit of the ideal.

Exactly how do lawns contribute to illness, extinction, and our climate crisis? First, most people don't realize that the lawn is "an ecological dead zone," as Doug Tallamy, author of *Nature's Best Hope,* calls it. This means that the lawn does not provide habitat for pollinators and other native beneficial insects that we want and need in our world. Without habitat for the little guys—and for more reasons explained below—extinction starts to creep up the food chain. Audubon reports we've lost three billion birds in North America since 1970.

Second, that "dead zone" extends down into the soil, too. Every lawn chemical, even plain old synthetic fertilizer, destroys the beautiful complex of microscopic life in the soil. This community of organisms works hard to sequester carbon and perform many other functions. When the microbes are gone, so are the ecosystem services they provide.

Third, according to most lawn care advice out there, maintaining a pristine lawn requires an arsenal of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. If we look at the *active ingredient* on a pesticide label and do a quick search using the *Beyond Pesticides* website (beyondpesticides.org/resources/pesticide-gateway), we can clearly see the negative health effects that science has already connected to the products for sale right now on the shelves at our local garden center or sitting in our own garage.

For example *malathion,* the active ingredient in many pesticides, has been shown to be an endocrine disrupter. It also has been shown to cause negative reproductive effects, neurotoxicity, kidney/liver damage, and birth/developmental defects. It is found in our groundwater. It is toxic to fish, birds, and bees.

Next, as we simply mow our turfgrass every week, we are also limiting the depth that the roots can grow underground. When we have heavy rains, the roots cannot absorb as much water as deeper-rooted plants, contributing to runoff and flooding.

When my husband and I moved into our home over three years ago, we did an "accidental experiment" in our far back yard. I did not want us to mow every square foot of land, so we only mowed pathways. The first two years, there was flooding in a particular low spot when we had heavy rains. In the third year, after heavy rains, the area did not flood! I was shocked and excited to realize that *not mowing* for just two years had allowed the existing grasses to grow deeper roots and tops, absorbing and transpiring the excess rain before it had a chance to puddle. Bravo, ecosystem services!

Mowing every week also adds to the arsenal of toxins in our world. Consider these statistics according to Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) studies:

> Americans burn 800 million gallons of gas every year trimming yards. In one hour of operation, one *new* gas-powered lawn mower produces an amount of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxide air pollution equal to *eleven* new cars driven for one hour.
>
> Adverse health effects from gas-powered lawn and garden equipment emissions are well known. Benzene...and formaldehyde are listed among the four top ranking cancer-causing compounds. They cause lymphomas, leukemias, and other types of cancer. Ground level ozone … and fine particulate matter cause or contribute to heart attack, stroke, congestive heart failure, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cancer, and early death.

That's a lot of bad news there but hang on—we've almost made it to the good news.

What is a conscientious lawn owner to do? If you're not quite ready to overhaul the whole yard, and you like a little lawn, there's still hope. Contrary to what we're told, lawns can be maintained beautifully and organically. Why isn't this common knowledge? Because there is a distinct lack of university research and funding in organic methodology. Lack of university research trickles down through the cooperative extension service, resulting in a dearth of public information, few organic products, such as fertilizer and pest control, and a lack of horticulture professionals trained and knowledgeable in organic products and methods.

Case in point: after researching almost a dozen lawn companies in our area who advertised organic lawn care, I interviewed the two that seemed most promising. Each one said that only 5% of their customers choose their 100% organic option. Sadly, neither one of these reps spoke knowledgeably about what it takes to maintain a lawn organically. Each organic "lawn care specialist" pushed the chemical weed control option. It is no surprise they didn't have more organic customers.

I needed more good news. Therefore, I returned to my roots—a mecca of organic information and my alma mater, The Natural Gardener in Austin, Texas. This is where I spent 18 years learning and teaching organic methods. From their referral list, I found several recommended lawn care companies who knew their business. If an organic lawn can make it in Central Texas, it can make it anywhere. Southeast Michigan offers a much more hospitable environment for turfgrass: deep, fertile soil and regular rainfall, and a distinct lack of rocks, drought, and scorching heat.

I spoke with Barry Fassauer II, owner of *Green Earth Conservation Lawn* in Austin. His company offers an "organic, all electric, no emissions, sustainable lawn care and maintenance service." He has been in business for about five years, employs seven staff members on three crews, caring for 500-600 lawns. He knows that to offer fully organic lawn care, he has to be educated and must educate his customers. He said, "I'm yapping about organics all day long!" Switching from a chemical regimen to organic requires patience and understanding of how nature works. "It's a marathon," Fassauer says, "not a sprint. Every chemical applied to the soil does harm," so it takes time to reverse that harm and create a healthy, sustainable lawn. Why go to such trouble? Fassauer came from a farming family in Amarillo who used the usual array of chemicals. When his family members started getting cancer, he sought another way. It's the same reason I am passionate about organic gardening.

THIS IS A WONDERFUL TIME TO EXPLORE A FRESH OUTLOOK ON OUR LITTLE PIECE OF EARTH.

What does organic lawn care look like? First, ditch all chemicals. Use organic fertilizer. Espoma All-Season Lawn Food or Sustane 8-2-4 are two pelletized choices. Don't chain yourself to mowing every week. Mow as high as the mower allows and leave the clippings—that's free fertilizer and crucial organic matter.

If your budget and time allow, go a step further and top dress with a half-inch or less of the real deal: good quality compost. Compost does more to heal damaged soil than anything else. It adds back the microorganisms, plus the organic matter that is the food they need to survive. That organic matter also loosens a compact or clayey soil and helps bind a sandy soil. It adds nutrients to feed the lawn. For a lawn transitioning to organic, applying compost once every spring or fall for a couple of years would do wonders. Especially add compost to the weedy areas. Studies have shown that weeds are less likely to grow in an area where compost was applied. Tuthill Farms in South Lyon makes the best bulk compost I've seen or buy bags at your local garden center.

Finally, remember that diversity is a good thing—in life and lawn—so rethink "weeds" in the lawn. Intentionally plant some white clover to add diversity and beneficial insect habitat. If you *must* get control over the most invasive members of the "alternative lawn plants" category, there are several choices. First realize that the healthier soil is, the thicker the lawn grows, which crowds out weeds. Fassauer and I would recommend corn gluten as a pre-emergent weed killer and spot treating weeds with a mixture of one gallon 20% vinegar with two tablespoons of dish soap and/or 3 tablespoons of orange oil. Remember that building back healthy soil and its living ecosystem takes time and patience.

Going organic and increasing diversity in our existing lawn and landscape will do wonders to turn an ecological dead zone into a carbon-sequestering system. For creating next-level environmental services, I discovered two local companies and one organization right in our backyard.

BUT MONOCULTURES DO NOT EXIST IN NATURE. LAWN IS AN ARTIFICIAL DESIGN FEATURE, AND WE HAVE 40 MILLION ACRES OF IT IN THE US… FROM THE LATE 1700S TO 2022 IS A LONG TIME TO ADHERE TO A SINGLE FASHION.

If you have ever stopped in your tracks to see a beautiful Southeast Michigan native garden or landscape, alive with butterflies and hummingbirds, it may have been designed or restored by PlantWise (plantwiserestoration.com). In business since 1998, David Mindell and his crews have installed native landscapes and rain gardens for homeowners all across southeastern Michigan in Ann Arbor, Chelsea, Whitmore Lake, Dexter, Gregory, and beyond. They work on family-sized yards all the way up to thousand-acre properties managed by municipalities or conservancies. The PlantWise mission is to do "the most ecological and aesthetic good for the sites in which we work."

In September of last year, I spoke with Mindell. He shared some of the success stories from larger properties they've worked on.

> For the last three years we've been working with a private landowner down in Tecumseh.
>
> They've got about 50 acres that used to be a sand and gravel mine. It was abandoned as a mine many years ago. We've worked on knocking down the weeds throughout that area, and then planting the whole thing to a tallgrass prairie. This is the end of the second full growing season, and we're starting to see all kinds of cool native plants coming, ranging from Lupine to Horsemint (Beebalm), and Black-eyed Susans, Blue Vervain, and lots of species diversity already. Lots of Little Bluestem and Indian Grass. It's really fun to see those larger landscapes transform into something that's going to be such a boon to pollinators, as well as other wildlife.
>
> One of the crazy things is that many native species do great in terrible soils. So, while the topsoil had been stripped away and that was not a nutrient-rich site, oftentimes that's perfect for many native species. Then, very quickly they (the native plants) are going to start to rebuild those rich soil conditions.

Many of us, myself included, are disheartened to see the effects of mining and other destructive actions on our earth. It is so encouraging and exciting to learn from David Mindell that such a degraded environment could bounce back so significantly in just two growing seasons.

Michigan has almost 3,300 miles of Great Lakes shoreline. Add to that the shorelines of over 11,000 inland lakes over five acres in size, and we certainly have an abundance of beautiful lakeshore vistas. That intersection between the lake (or river) and land is an incredibly diverse and sensitive part of our landscape called the riparian zone.

Landowners who build retaining walls or have a lawn all the way up to the riparian zone have likely witnessed the destructive power of water and ice which carve into the banks and erode the soil. I caught up with Jim Brueck to find out how he and his crews at Native Lakescapes are restoring this unique ecosystem.

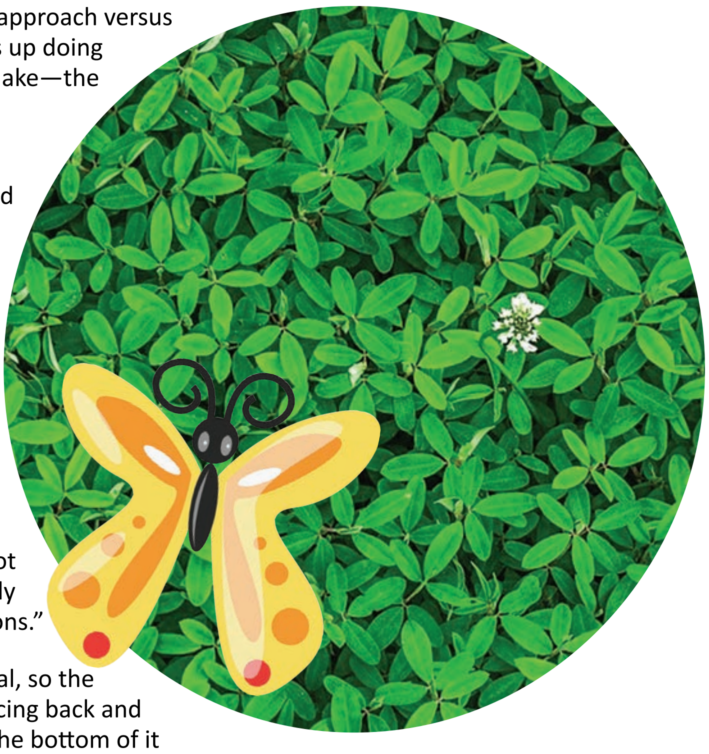
Brueck started Native Lakescapes in 2009. He grew up hiking, fishing, and hunting, and later in life learned about native plants and shoreline restoration. He and his crew have created "native lakescapes" on more than 15 lakes, including his own home on Middle Lake. Brueck told me:

> The whole principle behind a more natural shoreline is to try to create a riparian buffer that allows a movement of wildlife from aquatic to upland. In order to do that, you have to have a variety of different plant material. You end up with this aquatic zone, and then the transitional or emerging (zone), and then upland.
>
> The fascinating thing is that it's probably one of the most diverse habitats that exists—that transitional area going from aquatic to upland. That in itself is kind of mind-boggling, saying, 'Wow, that's kind of cool! Right here in my yard I've got one of the most diverse habitats that exists!' It provides a necessary transition for reptiles, turtles, and frogs that move from aquatic to uplands.

Bringing Nature Back to Our Yard, continued...

> The buffer protects the lake from runoff, whether it be fertilizer or pet waste or whatever. It absorbs that and filtrates it down through the roots.

Not only that, Brueck said that having those three zones of plant life—aquatic, transitional, and upland—also protects the shoreline from erosion. It's for all those reasons that myself and other people say, "Hey, you know, that's a better approach versus a seawall, which ends up doing more damage to the lake—the scouring across it."



I had to ask, "What is scouring?" Brueck said that the wave energy washing up against the shoreline erodes the soil behind the man-made seawall, and the lake bottom soil beneath the structure. In the spring when lake ice starts to melt, he's seen the ice move "four or five foot boulders that probably weigh two or three tons."

"The seawall is vertical, so the combination of bouncing back and then scouring along the bottom of it … there's no hope for anything to grow there—no plant life. If you have no plants, you've taken away fish habitat. You're taking away the plants that help oxidize the lake."

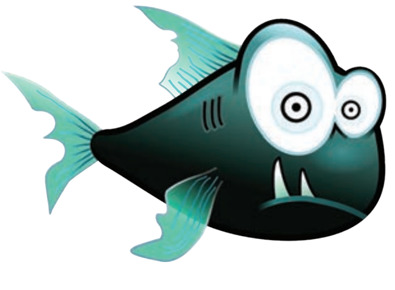
Native Lakescapes uses a combination of native shoreline plants, boulders, and a variety of stabilization techniques to make the shoreline withstand the power of the water.

Brueck said that when you have a natural shoreline with plants providing wildlife habitat "all those things are helping the overall lake's nutrition and the lake's overall diversity." A natural shoreline provides other benefits to landowners and lake as well. Just like any native planting, it reduces the amount of lawn mowing. It also discourages geese from the yard. These riparian buffers, with their deep-rooted plants, also provide flood control.

Brueck said, "If you are really wanting to help maintain a sustainable earth that you'd like to pass on to your children and grandchildren, here's a way to do that. And it's kind of a no pain, you know?"

This restoration work is absolutely essential right now and into the foreseeable future to help reverse climate change and sustain all life on earth. At the same time, with all due respect to Brueck and Mindell, our ultimate goal should be to eventually make restoration work obsolete! What? As the number one life form with the power to prevent further damage to our valuable ecosystems, humans must protect what we already have. One way to do this is to speak up *before* developers raze entire ecosystems to create new shopping malls and subdivisions. We can all become more aware of environmentally-sensitive development projects and make a phone call or write a letter. When we need to buy a new home, we can buy into an established neighborhood instead of newly-built subdivisions. When we need a new business location, we can renovate an existing building. We can vote with our dollars, our voices, our ballots, and all our actions. We can also support organizations that are actively protecting and restoring ecosystems that already exist on our public lands.

I was introduced to the work of Friends of the Rouge when they held a native plant sale near my home. Friends of the Rouge is a very busy and productive organization. They have conducted annual trash cleanups since 1986. They teach elementary, middle school, and high school students all across southeastern Michigan. They teach residents how to care for the river by planting rain gardens and native plants.



"DO UNTO THOSE DOWNSTREAM AS YOU WOULD HAVE THOSE UPSTREAM DO UNTO YOU."

— WENDELL BERRY

The Friends have over 62,000 volunteers, some of whom are citizen scientists monitoring the health of the Rouge River Watershed. And Friends of the Rouge is developing a 27-mile paddling trail called the Lower Rouge River Water Trail or the Blueway Trail, from Canton to the Detroit River.

Last fall, I had the great pleasure of talking with Herman Jenkins, Trails Program Manager for FOTR. Herman is working to help make this Blueway Trail happen. The goal is to make it "fully accessible, with kayak launches and access points for people to be able to get into the water safely." As of now, you can get on the river at the boat launch at TC Fieldhouse in Melvindale and exit at the Detroit River. That is a trip that will take about an hour and a half. As Herman says, that is really for the kayaking or canoeing enthusiasts. He and FOTR are working toward having multiple boat launches along this 27-mile stretch so that more people can enjoy the water and have a "more modest, recreational experience—something for families, groups of friends, or date night." Herman says that with more options for shorter paddle trips, people would be able to "experience this hidden treasure that's right in their backyard."

Wayne County parks and eleven communities are situated along the banks of the Blueway Trail. Jenkins expressed:

> The Rouge River is natural connective tissue that brings these communities together. The entire vision is really looking at how can we take this greatly restored Rouge River, how can we use that as a tool to really foster true and meaningful access and connectedness within these communities, using the river as a hub. So that's the vision. That's my role. I'm wearing a different hat every day. A lot goes into making a water trail real.

WHAT IS A CONSCIENTIOUS LAWN OWNER TO DO? IF YOU'RE NOT QUITE READY TO OVERHAUL THE WHOLE YARD, AND YOU LIKE A LITTLE LAWN, THERE'S STILL HOPE.

What else goes into it? Friends of the Rouge focuses on water quality for the safety and well-being of fish, wildlife, and humans. The mission behind everything they do is to improve the health of the Rouge River Watershed, from educating children and adults to cleaning up trash and opening log jams, along with building the Blueway Trail. Jenkins continued:

> When I was a kid, the Rouge River was heavily polluted, a place that you didn't want to go. It was very much neglected and a sad state of affairs. Fast forward into the future and I'm in a role where I'm creating a new built environment and new opportunities for my children to have a completely different relationship with the Rouge River. So for me, it's a tremendous opportunity. There's a sense of permanence, potentially, to the work that we're doing, where this will far outlive me and my relevance in the world and just be a great benefit to a good number of people in Metro Detroit.

Spending just a half hour with Jenkins, listening to what he and Friends of the Rouge are doing, was way beyond beautiful. It enlivens my heart and inspires me to continue the work that I am doing.

Moving back into our home landscape, for my last interview I explored a landscape design concept that has inspired me since 2007, when I took my first Permaculture Design Course (PDC). Last October, I interviewed two members of *Midwest Permaculture*, an educational organization in Illinois. Owners Becky and Bill Wilson have been teaching permaculture for 15 years. They've taught over 88 courses and over 1700 graduates from all over the Midwest and the world.

Permaculture is a contraction of the words *permanent* and *agriculture*. The permaculture concept was developed by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in 1974. Mollison defines permaculture as "the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally-productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people providing their food, energy, shelter, and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way." Permaculture can be deep and complex and surprisingly simple.

I met with Bill Wilson, co-owner of Midwest Permaculture, and Megan Christian, a recent-student-turned-staff-member. I appreciated hearing about permaculture through the eyes of both a veteran permaculturist and a young teacher and designer.

Wilson shares:

> Just imagine that you walk out of your house, and you just have one fruit tree. It's in full production that particular year, and it's just this incredible bounty. Every time you walk in and out of your house, you have a fresh pear or fresh apple or peach. It's there for you in this incredible abundance, and what a pleasure that is to have fresh, ripe fruit right off the tree for like a month. If

> “THOUGH THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD ARE INCREASINGLY COMPLEX, THE SOLUTIONS REMAIN EMBARRASSINGLY SIMPLE.”
>
> –BILL MOLLISON

you preserve it and store it, now you’ve got it for six months—even a year if you can it. What a joy that is! If you know what’s in your soil, it could be some of the healthiest food you eat all year.

Now in permaculture we say, well, that was lovely. What else could I do? Why don’t I plant asparagus over here? And then in the spring, I just get asparagus! How about rhubarb over there? You start grouping things together and you can make little corners of your yard look like parks. They’re gorgeous and functional. Now you’ve got herbs in there and you’ve got plants that attract beautiful butterflies and other kinds of insects. Now it becomes fascinating. That’s what this is about. How do I make my yard become a place I love to be in?

We had this front yard, and we liked our front yard, but we never spent any time in it. When the boys were small, we’d go out there and roll a ball around or something, but that was maybe 15 hours of their childhood. Now we are in that front yard every single day. It is such a pleasure to walk into our yard. We have paths and all different plants growing, and the neighbors come. The kids love playing in our front yard because it’s so interesting.

Everybody has this idea you have to have grass. You put children in an area where there are rocks and some logs, trees, paths, and little low spots, frogs and toads jumping around and stuff—they are captivated and they’re learning! There’s a whole lot more to learn in our front yard than there is in a grass yard. So, this is mind-changing—paradigm-shifting—in terms of quality of life for all members of your family to be able to have a bit of nature right outside your front or back door.

Megan Christian advised, “Start with something small. Don’t jump in and feel overwhelmed. There are so many small changes that we can make that are going to make a huge difference.” She and Wilson also emphasized that if you like lawn, simply raising the mower deck to four inches builds up the soil, helps to improve rainwater absorption, and looks as beautiful as a two-inch lawn.

Christian also shared about the first step in the permaculture design process: observation. “We’re gathering as much data as possible. We’re observing how water is moving across our property. We’re observing the location of the sun and the shade patterns throughout our property. We’re learning to recognize patterns, and the way our property is interacting with itself. We can’t create a coherent design without understanding our property fully.”

There’s something different to see on every property. That’s what we lose when we try to get our yard to look just like the neighbors or a template from *Garden Design* magazine. The first step of permaculture design—observation—recognizes and honors the beauty and the diversity of every square inch of our earth. From there, we restore our land to a healthy, self-sustaining habitat for ourselves and all of life.

> GOING ORGANIC AND INCREASING DIVERSITY IN OUR EXISTING LAWN AND LANDSCAPE WILL DO WONDERS TO TURN AN ECOLOGICAL DEAD ZONE INTO A CARBON-SEQUESTERING SYSTEM. FOR CREATING NEXT-LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, I DISCOVERED TWO LOCAL COMPANIES AND ONE ORGANIZATION RIGHT IN OUR BACKYARD

Right now, we know we are faced with a multitude of challenges, seemingly more so than any time in our lifetime. If we look at “everything that is wrong with our world,” we are likely to become overwhelmed with anxiety and powerlessness. We cannot fix everything. Yet, “the antidote for anxiety is action.” We can choose one thing to do, and start there.

These days, every solution-oriented action I can take—grand or small—is a balm to my soul. Every time I have the opportunity in my business to coach a new organic gardener or share with a new audience the beauty and intricacy of nature, I feel exhilarated. Every time I speak up, even if my voice shakes, is spiritual nutrition to me. I am rejuvenated when I have the inner strength to champion solutions versus despair. Likewise, every time I see another person or organization using their expertise, power, and action to heal some of the ills that face us, it lightens my spirit and inspires me to do more.

I am so grateful to these six humans for sharing their time with me, and for all the work they and their organizations are doing. No matter how grand or small, thank *you* dear reader for every choice you are making to be a part of the solution.

Rosina Newton is an organic gardening coach, speaker, and landscape designer. Find out more at newearthhomeandgarden.com.

NEED HELP BRINGING NATURE BACK INTO YOUR YARD? HERE ARE SOME LOCAL COMPANIES AND RESOURCES THAT CAN HELP!

TUTHILL FARMS

A Sesquicentennial Farm. They sell farm compost, supersoil, and wood mulch. Visit tuthillfarms.com for more information. They are located at 10505 Tuthill Road, South Lyon, MI 48178. Or give them a call at (734) 449-8100.

PLANTWISE

PlantWise is dedicated to creating, restoring, and interpreting native ecosystems and plant communities. Visit Plantwiserestoration.com to learn more or call (734) 665-7168.

NATIVE LAKESCAPES

Native Lakescapes specializes in design and installation of natural shorelines, sustainable riparian buffers, indigenous plants and grasses, bio-engineering practices, and in creating diverse habitats. Learn more online at nativelakescapes.com, email jim@nativelakescapes.com or call (248) 736-3014.

FRIENDS OF THE ROUGE

The mission of Friends of the Rouge is to restore, protect, and enhance the Rouge River watershed through stewardship, education, and collaboration. Learn more at friends@therouge.org or call (734) 927-4900.

MIDWEST PERMACULTURE

Midwest Permaculture delivers enlivening permaculture webinars, 8-day design certification courses, education, seminars, and classes in permaculture for the Midwest. Learn more at midwespermaculture.com, email outreach@midwestpermaculture.com or call (815) 256-2215.

GROVE EMOTIONAL
HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

OFFERING INDIVIDUALIZED MINDFULNESS, MEDITATION, AND TRAUMA-SENSITIVE YOGA

DEEPEN YOUR HEALING WITH INSIGHT AND COMPASSION

visit www.groveemotionalhealth.com

Vivante

NOTES FROM A YEAR OF DREAMING DANGEROUSLY

By Irena Nagler

March 12, 2020. Out on the town with friends. We are in a restaurant. Upon leaving, we see it has mysterious doorframes. Two are rectangular. One is round, named "Eternity", and seems to be forbidden, but we are drawn to defy that and move toward it anyway. It has a silver-gray cast. Within it is a mirror, in which we see someone whose body has become a chair with white plastic upholstery. The doorway now reminds me of a window in a washing machine.

Everything dreams. Every element, every cell, every organism.

While asleep, or under waking skin, we often dream of what we don't think about or carry out in everyday consciousness.

During 2020-21, I dreamed of lively, open-faced groups gathered in buildings after midnight, of adventurers defying orders. I dreamed questions and clues to examine.

The human collective dreams. In 2015, photos were posted in social media of a fata morgana vision: a city in clouds over China. Real event or hoax, it was evocative and rang true on a mythic level.

In the winter of 2020, some of those massed clouds dissipated as factories closed. Serial images of polluted skies followed by clearing ones were bandied about the world.

In some of the factories, in vast spaces filled with lines of people and machines, employees spent long, monotonous, underpaid hours manufacturing electronic devices to be shipped around the world. Many of the workers were(?) immigrants from the Philippines, seeking conditions beyond current dictatorship and an instability that reportedly has existed since US occupation.

The employees in photographs and films wear gloves. Some might wear masks. Mask-wearing has been common in Asia for decades: a courtesy when not feeling well or a request for privacy on public transportation.

China has a near-monopoly on manufacture of electronic communication devices. It also hosts more rare-earth mining for electronic and alternative technology than any other nation. Much of it involves separating magnetic from radioactive substances, which contaminates water and soil. A prominent info-tech CEO was asked once about "bringing the work home." Without describing labor conditions or pollution, he answered that it would be impossible to persuade Americans to do the work needed to meet the vast demand.

At home, in March 2020, dream-smog drifts and settles in late winter air. "It's weird, they're shutting down the entire country," says a manager at work. "I used to work in Florida. It's like preparing for a hurricane," replies a co-worker.

The city is petrified and hushed. At the bus station, a man stumbles to the ground near the street. I ask him if he's all right and find his phone for him. He wants to shake hands. I do, and am remonstrated with the next day by friends for having touched him. The bus is almost empty.

March 17, 2020. More washing machines! They're arrayed outdoors. There is news of a darkened sun. I see it now, between clouds, black with a deep-purple cast like blackberry juice. Something seems deceptive about it. The light hasn't changed: it's full daylight, late morning, with no violet cast to the atmosphere. And the purple sun is in the southwest, not easterly as it normally would be.

No internet. My last day online is March 18. I have computers for writing and music, but I chose a few years ago not to go online at home anymore, and I don't intend to be drawn back into it under pressure now. I love the Internet, but I'm EMF-sensitive to a degree and have always felt dubious about the materials composing the machines, even before studying the supply chains for them. I don't have a smartphone, for that and other reasons.

I barely make it out of the Michigan Union before it closes. They're waiting for me to go. I'm the last one in the room, filling out a census form, observing and experiencing the crude beginnings of Facebook censorship in regard to Covid-19.

I step out into a gray day. I feel strangely liberated, encountering an organic pulse of living and dreaming weighed upon by fear. I understand that for many it is a reality calling forth courage and compassion.

I want to acknowledge various angles and listen to stories that reach me. Even without Internet, they do. Some of my friends research diligently, digging beneath predominant narratives, often in reputable sources of scientific data, of organizational track records and history. One friend has connections with microbiologists. Others know hospital workers. There's an intelligent questioning that bears no resemblance to the simplistic political dualities perpetuated by media. I suspect exaggeration of the more frightening possibilities in an effort at crowd-control, trumping genuine education to a disquieting degree.

Despite denial from some quarters, there is real illness and death. It is not, even in potential, the medieval-street plague vaguely hinted at as ensuing if people don't behave. It doesn't, in scale, resemble what I gather about 1918, to which it's often compared openly. Yet, it may be like them during that March and April within emergency rooms and hospital wards.

There is an atmosphere of war, evoking realms of reconnaissance and defense near boundaries of atmosphere and space, an invisible weight drawing near. I've seldom heard so much military language applied to a situation. Even beyond the eerily exhilarating Blue Angels show in Spring 2020, and the annual Yankee Air Museum Display, I've never seen so many military planes flying low, as if hunting down microbes with behemoths.

Yet at our feet, on sidewalks, anonymous sweet drawings and messages are chalked, hearts and flowers and words of comfort.

I remember huddling one night under the big beech tree in Island Park with friends and glowing lanterns. Our hands on the dark earth, knowing we were all right down on the nurturing ground, no matter what was happening higher up where helicopters and potential surveillance craft and harsh light seemed to drown the stars.

Two friends of mine died during March and April 2020, but not of Covid. One of them, who thrived on in-person visits, may be among those described in two far-flung sources: a British medical journal, and a nurse in an Oakland County hospital. ("More elderly people are dying of neglect than are actually dying of Covid," they both said.)

While asleep, or under waking skin, we often dream of what we don't think about or carry out in everyday consciousness.

April 11, 2020. Dreaming about the wave of Covid-19. There is a rowboat on a sea, near a mountain. An impression of "things turning around by tomorrow." In the rowboat is a man with black hair and a beard, maybe a Cossack. He is a "flame-adventurer," a maverick, able to light fire with a torch and reverse the course of things. I've dreamt of him before.

I take springtime walks, alone and with others. The wind pushes and pulls. The flow of air billows in the leaves, tugs at our hair, the smells of spring are fresh and moist, and the not-so-distant Great Lakes churn—you can taste them in the wind. Clouds voyage over the edge of the earth-curve. Trips to Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, water melting into distant sky.

A glimpse between houses in a condo complex gives the appearance of a faerie road, wending an alternate route across the landscape toward hills opposite. So many worlds occupy the same space, many of them probably more real than the grids we have laid down. Once, our human paths were worn by use, instead of imposed by a few planners.

In the Arb, a woodpecker hammers a branch. I imagine a network of tunnels throughout the interior of the living system, avenues of communication and connection, hidden, inaccessible to control...tunneling within the world. The woodpecker is opening windows and slip-holes into it. A deep woodpecker-grid. I will remember it now when I hear that knocking on wood.

March 23, 2020. In a shopping mall. An illness is going around. Near waking, someone says to me, "Dream about skating. Dream about horses. Should help."

I saw ultraviolet light on my inner eyelids, or from the corner of my eye, or inter-dimensionally. A nimbus, a bee vision overlaying a cluster of roadside wildflowers in June. It was like seeing them through the eyes of someone in an otherworld. I sensed violet hues floating everywhere.

In my "Fairy Ring" card set, my favorite is the "Fairy Hart." The great white stag leads you on adventures, and you must follow. His reversed aspect is "The Unicorn," seen reflected in a pool, with a violet sky beneath him. The Faerie Hart says, "Use my antlers to pierce the cloud. Thrust rays like sun to shred it." Deer and horses and skaters glide. By virtue of hooves and blades they move as though in another plane.

July 18, 2020. There is to be an event at a conference center. Something to do with the Neowise comet. It will be in the early morning hours just after midnight. Jade and Geoff and I decide to go. We take a bus. I notice no one is wearing masks. Nor is anyone at the conference center. It's a vital scene, bursting with in-person community and energy.

We move through corridors and rooms, among streams of people. I notice Nicole Maxwell, a dancer who, in the 1960s, traveled to the South American rainforest and was educated in herbs by indigenous doctors. With naïve trust, she brought back samples for pharmaceutical companies, which then deliberately lost and mixed them up. She returned to the forest to do her own research. Now, in the dream, our eyes meet in recognition.

Ahead of us are two rooms. In one there are living sculptures of intricate gold wire. They move about slowly. They remind me of el-Anatsui's work from Nigeria. In the other room is the event we're heading for. Performance artists, all male, roll great cylinders of gold on the floor of a gym. They clang against each other. It's a sound-sculpture. Sand is scattered, and the scrape and sibilant brush of it is added to the sound-mix. Finally, large discs of polished red stone are thrown down and moved around to click and clack among the rhythms of scratch and hiss and golden clang. They resemble red blood cells. I intend to dance among the cylinders and sand-grains and rocks—and know that this will be welcome.

I want to see Ibrahim Manama's installation at the UMMA, jute bags sewn together covering the entire façade of the newer building annex. It's an expression relating to global commerce. Because of quarantine, the artist could not travel to Michigan to assemble his work, so it was carried out by local people at the university.

But, I get the dates of the exhibition wrong and miss it. Disappointed. I'm confronted instead by a new, monolithic sculpture, "Behind the Walls" by Jaume Plensa. It's a white, polyester resin and marble-dust portrait of a woman covering her eyes with her hands. It's beautifully executed, and I'd be comfortable enough coming upon it in the garden of a city art museum. It is interesting in photos of its former installation in Rockefeller Plaza with city crowds streaming by, but the dominating size, and intended permanence of it at a university, are disturbing to me. Why a permanent sculpture of a young woman, possibly of typical student age, covering her eyes? Or are they being covered by someone standing behind her?

I imagine a group of witchy young women dressed as Medusas, posing for a photograph, gathered around it with eyes staring wide.

I dream of other secret night-meetings, mostly at the library where I've resumed working. In the dreams, the energy is cheerful. Steps outside lead down a Mayan pyramid. Once, I parachuted to the library grounds from above them. Inside the building there's a swimming pool. A co-worker, Angella, and I are preparing for a party.

The first of several attempts to gather a group in person: June, 2020, under the Kentucky coffee trees at Leslie Science Center. We spread ourselves apart several feet. No one wears a mask. We pass around a talking stick, with variations on welcome or reluctance to touch it. Not much is known yet about surfaces and transmission—but the beribboned stick makes its rounds. Each person can talk, for ten minutes without interruption, about their experiences, beliefs, thoughts, and feelings. It's powerful. There are some major differences of opinion, but the gathering remains harmonious, bonded, even through some arguments that occur later on. Curtis Glatter plays strong percussion; we dance and touch trees.

Each time we meet, rainbows paint the air, and we recover for a moment our sense of balance and sane reality.

August, Annual River and Dream dance by invitation only to "regulars." We prepare to walk into the water. Jennifer arranges a turquoise veil over Hailey's lower face and she becomes a mysterious priestess. Performances: Kelsey's clear voice sounds from a rock near the water—fey, sweet, and piercing, accompanied by her steel tongue drum. Jade and Geoff play a river song from beside the platform where those who witness stand or sit on a bench. I dance at the river's edge in the guise of the green cat I'd dreamed of who stirs the waters and guards the memories of rocks. Cindy performs belly dance on the boardwalk. Then we tread one by one into the Huron to dance in rhythm with currents of water and air and music. At moments we are still so that the river is all that moves.

Late August, in a wide circle, seven of us spaced well apart. The river braids gold and green light. We tell true stories. A brood of "teenage" ducks, fully-grown but with feathers so smooth and shiny they seem polished, come staggering excitedly into the circle. They remain there until Daniel's dog, Stella, barks at them, and then they flee precipitously.

"You're the last person I hugged," one friend tells me." Right on the street by the Federal Building. I remember the surge of warmth and defiance. That was five months ago, back on March 13.

They're waiting for me to go. I'm the last one in the room, filling out a census form, observing and experiencing the crude beginnings of Facebook censorship in regard to Covid-19.

This August evening, Jade and Geoff play more music. A silvery insect dances between them like a fleck of mercury, and a frog sings from the river. I present "Jaguar Brings Fire," a dance based on a Seddon-Boulet painting. The Cedar Bend hill behind us is breathing, alive with late-summer sounds, a mesh of gold and silver: crickets, cicadas, breezes, steeped in a green brushy mist.

June 26, 2020. A mountain, with an opening into it. I see a fire shining in a cave. A community of people. They are, in part, learning what to do in a time like this one. Following them will be another group, "solar" again, living out in sunlight.

Two fire gatherings: one on Halloween night, the other six months later. The phoenix in its fiery nest murmured and spat and rustled soft, searing feathers—the wood glowed and blackened. The moon hauled itself up through the tree line, lifted into clear sky, trailed silver on indigo water by the boardwalk. Fire coals warmed muffins. Ellie was a full moon, I was a fox-face, Win Quay was an elegant mystery cat, Daniel tended the fire. During the spring gathering, we told stories that flowed around us

DREAMING DANGEROUSLY continued

and into the night, touching pasts and futures, and I chose not to lead a planned ritual. It was too fine and real just to see certain friends again in the warm, wavering light.

May 18, 2021. I'm in a big courtyard, or schoolyard, or (I realize when waking) a village or city compound in Nigeria, where I lived for two years as a child. Square holes have been dug in the ground. Within them stirs some strange purple substance, both gelatinous and ethereal, streaked with silver. It has to do with vaccination. I step over and around them.

When I was seven years old, living in Ibadan, Nigeria, I began to write books. Short ones, but books, nonetheless. One of the first was named "Farland," for a country I imagined around Lithuania or Latvia. In Farland, some people could see faeries and some could not. It ran in families. The fae would sometimes dig invisible holes into which those who couldn't see them would find themselves falling. It does not escape me that I now live in the county of "Farland" (Washtenaw means "far country"). I learn during 2021 that an earlier form of vaccination named variolation existed in Africa and India. Powdered pathogens were administered through incisions in skin, not penetrating deep into the body, but apparently effective against illness. An African slave taught a version of it to physicians in the U.S.

December 24, 2020. A sculpture of metal strips and bars, composing a giant hand, next to a cart moving along a street. It reminds me of the old picture from the Yellow Pages: Let your fingers do the walking—stiff, clumsy fingers in this instance. It connects to Covid-19. We can change, move, or replace the hand to cure or change the situation.

I have a little Internet again by late June, and much more in November. I start to do research of my own. I learn more than I thought I would ever want to about viruses, epidemics past and present, inoculations, big pharmaceutical companies, their ties to government and technology corporations, legislation concerning them, and how laws are crafted.

March 30, 2021. Symbolically, workers are compelled to drink water with rust in it from an underground river.

Same night: A voice tells me, "Money and war have always been connected. Money comes from a dripping blade."

But it doesn't have to. Money is only symbolic credit and can be invested with whatever value or meaning the empowered choose, connected to the flow in any way. Its generative symbolism could be given into the hands of everyone, not only a few.

In 2018-19, I heard talk of "a big recession expected in 2020, to rival that of 2008." The signs were apparently there. I don't know how to read them. I am convinced, however, that the demand for endless growth is entering a tightening spiral. Centuries ago, when banking as we know it began, a hundred years might pass between crashes. In my grandparents' generation, forty years. Now the cycle is rapid. During low periods, the adventurous and skilled often know where to invest. Big tech companies have recently been involving themselves in "health care" and pharmaceuticals. A friend attended a seminar by an international bank five years ago. Participants were advised to invest in pharma.

The response to the virus (not the virus itself, as so often stated) fosters conditions of mixed environmental blessing and economic curse. Tourist hot spots suffering the weight of curiosity and high-speed travel: ancient walls crumbling, flowers crushed, canals overcrowded—now get a break. Some overworked humans are able to rest. I hear stories of environmental recoveries, reappearances of animals long departed from a region. At home, I hear a greater variety of birdsongs. Many of us learn to live in the moment, as the future is unpredictable.

Would it be possible to build a deliberate, just, and merciful pause into the rhythm of economic life? It would mean changing something fundamental in its mechanics. But that potential change, based in recognition of our kinship with each other and all life, may be what's needed to resolve what frightens us.

November 7, 2020. In two succeeding bowls or circular enclosures are groups of guinea pigs, packed close together. They are a variety of colors, some red-gingery.

June 25, 2020. I approach a Southern house among long silver-green grasses in moonlight. In the house are three ghost-children. A debate is occurring, do they have Covid or not?

> It is not, even in potential, the medieval-street plague vaguely hinted at as ensuing if people don't behave. It doesn't, in scale, resemble what I gather about 1918, to which it's often compared openly.

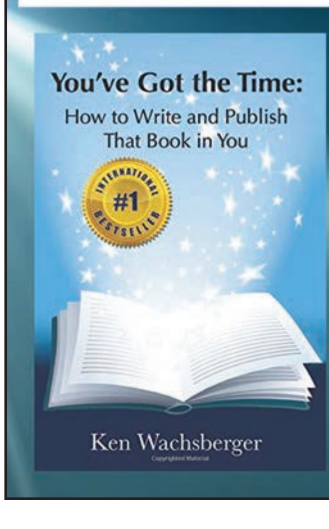
Walking in a mushroom-rich forest after a rainstorm, my friend and I tell faerie stories, and sense entryways opening into worlds that join the roots. Linearity dissolves into a mesh that science is only beginning to apprehend and describe. Maybe it was necessary at first to be atomistic, to study one thing at a time, replicate it in labs, and make statements based on a simpler conception. It's probably still how vaccines are created.

People close to the land have always sensed living webs from which the fae arise into human imagination that interprets a consciousness both close and foreign to our own. There are poisons and healing in it. We refuse to cooperate with it at peril to the whole. Within it, viruses have a vital, balancing role. They're highly intelligent and responsive. Life would not continue long without them.

Poor conditions of air, water, and soil, corresponding gut imbalances, pollution, social inequities, and a sense of despair all tend to foster disease. If the place in question is a tourist or business destination, illness may wind up traveling far. Electronics, little or no less than the petroleum industry, depend on mining which poisons and depletes ecosystems, alters familiar and sacred landscapes, and forces communities and cultures to adopt life-rhythms of invaders. There is not much financial incentive for recycling. The mining and manufacturing, dependent on fossil fuels, contribute to the smog-clouds in photographs. It's easier to ignore and dismiss if we don't have to see it in our own neighborhoods and environs. Easier, then, to promote a "new normal" that would be increasingly dependent on it, but that does not include or benefit half the earthly human population.

> Each time we meet, rainbows paint the air and we recover for a moment our sense of balance and sane reality.

THE BOOK COACH
KEN WACHSBERGER
World-Class Book Editing & Coaching with Decades of Experience and Success


You've Got the Time:
How to Write and Publish That Book in You
International #1 Bestseller
Ken Wachsberger

ken@kenthebookcoach.com
734 635 0577
https://kenthebookcoach.com

"Ken Wachsberger gets it!" – *Lois Creamer*
"Impeccable editing skills. He's the best!" – *Kathryn Dempsey*

Waking Journey: A Tarot card, the Eight of Cups, signifying a withdrawal. A woman follows a trail of goblets, some spilling seawater, into a cavern by a moonlit ocean. I follow her into an underworld realm of fungi, glowing little parasols, mycelia hairs, prismatic in darkness beneath the roots. I feel impelled to explore this realm. It's fantastic, alive, the origin of Faerie: beauty and a whisper of death, translation between elements and worlds. It's part of what pharmacologists and alchemists are drawn to infiltrate, and simultaneously a place where imaginative people find inspiration for creative media.

Under a powerful scope, we see floating discs and larva-like shapes immersed in soft rainbows: a tranquil yet disquieting image of a liminal zone between all possible conditions, of living and dying, health and disease. Microbes. From photos of their role in fermentation you can imagine the sensation of tiny, clinging fur coats soft against the skin. They seem to whisper continually of transmutation, sensual mergings, infusion of membranes with light.

Life sends forth tendrils, flows in waves, spirals, tree formations, scatters of blown-down leaves, collages of nuts and cones decaying into nourishment for rebirth. It contracts into seeds, expands into universes. No straight lines.

The digital world: Constructed of tiny squares, no taste, no touch, or none but friction with the machine, a faint scent of its components. Too much like the symptoms of the "novel" blood-disease that resembles, to my limited understanding, a poison more than any virus I'm more familiar with. A constriction or closure of the deepest instinctual senses that link us to early ancestry, to other animals, to this messy, yet dynamically balanced earthly life. The senses that can be fooled the least evoke memory.

Touch a machine and take yourself on an imaginative journey into its origins. Allow sensations to flow, enter its dream. The machine, as an entity, may not dream, but its elements do. They remember where they came from. They may remember hands that touched them, souls that intertwined momentarily with their substance. Even in dreaming and imagination, the experience of the senses is more complete than it is online.

In the Middle Ages and Renaissance, it was believed that spirits could be trapped in gems to act as servants. Lorenzo de'Medici was said to have died after he released a long-time spirit servant from a ring. The elemental creatures associated then with fire were called salamanders: little glowing dragons, visions within flames.

> I start to do research of my own. I learn more than I thought I would ever want to about viruses, epidemics past and present, inoculations, big pharmaceutical companies, their ties to government and technology corporations, legislation concerning them, and how laws are crafted.

I imagine sometimes that we have spirits or salamanders imprisoned or voluntarily participating in the working of electronic machines. Some of us know the sensation of creatures struggling to free themselves, as we hunch over blue-white fires, feeding them bits of ourselves.

June 5, 2020. My sixteen-year-old niece has a screen in front of her face. Her image is distorted, robotic. I am angry, declaring that I will protect her and her generation from having this imposed on them.

Three years ago, she and I looked up from a beach at Lake Michigan into a sky that was a midnight floor set with clouded millions of stars. The waves suddenly seemed to gather up more force in the night. "Maybe we don't really need all that stuff," she said. She meant the machines, and she's very good with them.

February 20, 2021. A structure of big green blocks is being built on a mountain plateau. It reminds me of Macchu Picchu, except that it's created from an artificial polymer. It's meant to be a healing, a cure. I am looking at it from above, as if flying. I am not sure I trust it.

July 31, 2020. A gray dome over the world, a "prison capsule." A way through it is shown: a Shinto torii gate. Beyond the gate is a forest.

"La Résistance Vivante." The phrase occurs to me. I hesitate, recalling the aphorism "What you resist persists." But I'm thinking of "La Résistance Française" in World War II, of healthy immune systems, of resistance to despair and to propaganda that undermines health and prosperity, sometimes in the name of promoting it.

What might be a vision of that resistance? We honor and trust the mesh of fungi and microbes. We understand that death is "a change of worlds," soul-shaking, yet necessary to life, alive in itself. There is a right timing for each of us, even while pledging to assist in healing. We know that choice and variety are vital and that complete control is neither necessary nor desirable. We develop an exchange mode that resonates with flows of service, materials, and gifting.

> The response to the virus (not the virus itself, as so often stated) fosters conditions of mixed environmental blessing and economic curse.

We ask the stars in their flower-patterns, the elements, the trees, the rocks, the animals, the core of Earth, the liquid fire that wraps it, the subterranean ocean beneath ringwoodite glass, for permission, for guidance, for inspiration. Ask, trust, and nurture the body, electricity cloaked in chemistry.

We unfold and recover capacities inherent in our own electromagnetic fields for communication, perception, and creativity. Other animals, and humans living close to the pulse, can know where to walk, smell approaching weather, sense impending earthquakes and tsunamis, communicate over distances without mechanical devices, and experience every element as conscious in its own way.

This blue and white and many-colored sphere is a wondrous adventure: One among many, no less than any.

By the river, Jenny and I laugh with gentle fists in the air. *"La Résistance!"*

March 29, 2021. A little wooden chest with drawers in it connects to my heritage from one of my grandfathers. I'm told that something automated would "work better." I refuse to accept that. I embrace the chest and know that love is the power.

Irena Nagler writes fiction, essay, and poetry, teaches environmental movement meditation, and is a visual and performing artist. She has been researching the environmental, social, and industrial underpinnings of current technology for eleven years. Contact her by email at: birena@umich.edu.

www.earthelementsmi.com
104 W Michigan Ave Suite 1 - Saline, MI 48176
(734) 470-6801

Earth
ELEMENTS

- Candles - Crystals - Smudges - Books -Journals -
- Organic Herbs - Loose Leaf Teas - Essential Oils -
- Incense - Resins - Soaps - Jewelry - Tarot Cards -
- Statuary - Herbal Bath Salts - Himalayan Salt -
- Ritual Tools & More -

$10 OFF PURCHASE OF $100 OR MORE
LIMIT ONE PER CUSTOMER, IN STORE ONLY
EXCLUDES GIFT CARDS AND SERVICES

https://www.instagram.com/earthelementsmi
https://www.facebook.com/earthelementsmi

The Process of ‘Becoming’ Through the Diamond Approach –

As Taught and Practiced by Lou Weir

Lou Weir, teacher of The Diamond Approach, in his home with feline companion, Tycho.

By Michelle McLemore
Photography by Joni Strickfaden

The life cycle of a butterfly is understood by most people: Butterfly lays eggs, a baby caterpillar called “larva” is born, eats a bunch, forms a cocoon (a chrysalis) and the creature gets renamed “pupa”; then, an adult butterfly emerges weeks or months later. Add the mating stage and repeat. Still, it is the in-between pupa stage—the literal and figurative “un-becoming” of the creature—which is arguably the most critical and yet the most downplayed, or even skipped, in explanations.

> It is the in-between pupa stage—the literal and figurative “un-becoming” of the creature—which is arguably the most critical and yet the most downplayed, or even skipped, in explanations.

Once securely inside the chrysalis (hanging upside down, mind you, which would be a little disorienting to begin with) a very active stage begins. The caterpillar uses the same enzymes used to earlier digest food to now begin to break down its own body. In a sense, it digests itself. The caterpillar literally liquifies to the most basic cell component. Some cells and tissues regrow into the new butterfly body. Other parts remain goo and settle to the bottom of the sac no longer necessary or helpful for the new, beautiful flying life form.

The Diamond Approach, as taught and practiced by Lou Weir at the Ridhwan School in Ann Arbor, can be likened to the pupa stage of metamorphoses. It is a cognizant, individualized, un-becoming process through active inquiry (psychologically and emotionally). It is a process which transforms students to becoming their most beautiful, authentic selves.

I met Weir for coffee on a temperate sunny day to learn more about him and this unique approach to personal growth. Though traffic and people hummed about us, Weir’s presence was of utmost calm in presence and energy. His face and expressions were gentle, eyes curious, and vocal pacing patiently thoughtful giving subtly prompting. As we talked, what started as a seemingly ethereal and abstract process became more clear. His enthusiasm for the approach was obvious and, admittedly, contagious.

> As we talked, what started as a seemingly ethereal and abstract process became more clear. His enthusiasm for the approach was obvious and, admittedly, contagious.

What is the basis?

The Diamond Approach is partly based on the psychology premise that one’s environment and closest people shape one’s personality. In the psychodynamic theory, Sigmund Freud broke down driving forces of personality as the id, the ego, and the superego. He viewed the interplay between these three factors as the main influences driving our thoughts, actions, and beliefs.

The Id—According to Freud, this is the only personality component present from birth; it is entirely unconscious and houses the instinctive behaviors needed for a baby to demand what it needs when it needs it. Freud also claims it is the source of all psychic energy. The Id is concerned with pleasure and strives for immediate gratification. Not gaining desires can cause anxiety or brooding tension.

The Ego—This emerges from the Id as a mediator to help the Id get what it needs in a socially acceptable manner in the real world. It functions across the unconscious, conscious, and preconscious states.

The Superego—Freud believed this aspect begins to develop around age five. It internalizes the standards and ideals society, and guardians, deem right or wrong. The superego, then, is our moral compass. The conscious stores up what society and family judge as wrong. Accepting these views can cause feelings of shame, guilt, or embarrassment if we engage in actions or thoughts that run counter. A separate aspect, the ego ideal, contains standards that the individual views as good or pleasing, providing motivation for how to act in a rewardable or acceptable way.

Weir adds, “the Critic is the voice of the Superego, and it uses mostly knowledge that was acquired by a five-year-old without the wisdom and perspective of a 30, 40, or 50 year-old person.” That skews its helpfulness at times. He continued, “your super ego has appropriated your sense of right and wrong which is removed from complete connection with [inherent] wisdom. For example, the Critic might whisper, “Nice girls don’t raise their voices.” This message produced generations of women who repressed their emotions, stifled their anger, and even moderated their joy in order to be safe, soft, gentle, and consistent partners….and internal guilt if they acted otherwise.

> In the ideal world, society and guardians would model and encourage love and listening to one’s true self and expression.

In the ideal world, society and guardians would model and encourage love and listening to one’s true self and expression. However, society’s morals and views of what is acceptable tend to change, sometimes within weeks or days. Parents or guardians who had challenging childhoods also tend to naturally repeat behaviors with their own children perpetuating skewed or unhealthy patterns.

In one’s quest for approval, safety, love, and support, the developing child adapts his behavior to fit in or to gain what is desired—or what society implies should be desired. Weir once wrote, “Because of our love for our parents, we start to give up on parts of ourselves” because they either “don’t recognize our true nature or are even challenged by it.” The Ego begins making judgement-calls on the Id’s requests based on societal pressure. If the learned value system consistently charges the individual to act against one’s authentic tendencies, then an overlay, slowly muffles the true self. As time goes on, it becomes harder to switch between pleasing others and being true to one’s thoughts and feelings. For some, the person eventually assumes the false identity believing it is the only self. Weir mused, “We inhabit it so fully, we forget our depth. We forget who we are.” Flat, shadow selves walk around doing the day’s business, occasionally registering the soft echo of the former self. But, if it *is* heard, the reminder of the other self’s existence is ignored or shoved down further and de-rationalized.

So, with no time to review if/when we are choosing authentically, the Critic in one’s head, establishes a more prominent residence. “It will use all your knowledge to try to ‘restrict’ and ‘guide’ you,” Weir warned. Yet, there may be a feeling of misalignment or a general lack of joy despite having an adequate job, family, and decent health. Weir pointed out that “Eastern teachers are often surprised about how much self-loathing meditators in the West actually feel. Time is spent looking at the sources of the self-hate.”

During the average lifetime, some may have a major life event or crisis causing interventions with a counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, family, or friends. With professional assistance we may begin to hear the internal nudges as our true self continues to try to reach our conscious brain. Will X, Y, or Z be helpful and healthful? Does this feel right or wrong?

Some of us will make slight corrections based on when we make the time to listen to this soft voice. However, complete honesty with one’s self can be challenging and sometimes scary. After living any level of an inauthentic life for any length of time, the thought of deconstructing one’s belief system in the hopes of finding a better, more peaceful existence might sound potentially fruitless. Who has the time and energy for that?

Perhaps a better question is, “Who doesn’t have the time and energy for that?” The un-becoming of a less-than-true individual may be messy, like a slow self-digestion and rebuilding process. Yet, in the Diamond Approach, one is not alone nor left as potential prey to large birds or random bullies with sticks who may badger the life under transformation.

How does it work?

Through meditation, one learns how to become comfortable with quiet time and focus on the internal self. What is thought and felt in the mind, body, and spirit? A second facet involves a supportive listener, teacher, or group of long-term, dedicated students. Reflective questions and in-person presence nurture a student to explore her own thoughts, beliefs, and emotions from past and present times. Weir explains that unlike in a counseling session, “we are not trying to solve anyone’s problems. The goal is to look deeper. There is no preset agenda.”

Through this personal, unrushed process, it is the student who chooses what memories, feelings, and sensations to follow. The next step is to personally explore causes, reactions, and meanings. Weir explained, “When working with a teacher one-on-one, there might be some prompts to help: How do you experience this in your body? Let yourself feel the whole feeling and allow it to be there without pushing it away. See what else is here. How did that develop?” The orientation is to keep the inquiry in the present moment rather than just telling a story. Taking your time to be totally with the experience is another way into this.” Per the Diamond Approach website, a student “goes through purification, clarification, and detachment of the events.”

> Through this personal, unrushed process, it is the student who chooses what memories, feelings, and sensations to follow.

Weir added, “The aim is toward different parts of personality and why we shy away from them. It requires vulnerability.” However, the beauty is “being present to these undigested places allows us to bring our current wisdom to them.” How many of our inner children need hugs, reassurance that they did not—and could not—do anything to deserve abuse, isolation, or neglect?

Continued on next page

Writers Wanted
for
THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL

We are looking for good articles about the holistic scene …

reportage, personal journaling and essays, profiles, interviews, journalistic explorations, and other feature writing.

Modest but respectable pay.
If you might be interested,
please write to Jennifer at
jennifer@crazywisdom.net.

Lou Weir’s Sample Introspection

Lou Weir: Do you want to do some of it?

Michelle McLemore: That would be great!

Lou Weir: What’s happening right now? What are you experiencing at this moment?

Michelle McLemore’s thoughts: The cacophony from the surrounding environment suddenly was even more chaotic and jarring than when we had first sat down. Traffic going through the intersection, the buzz of various restaurant patrons sitting outside in the closed off street, construction noise creeping between and over the buildings—it was ongoing, but suddenly heightened by drawing my focus away from interview responsibility.

M: “The noise is quite challenging, but it doesn’t overwhelm or counter the pleasant feeling of sitting here in the sun with you for this talk.”

W: So as you are sitting here aware of the pleasantness and exterior noise, just sit with both of those for a minute. What happens while you are resting in that space?

M: In the in-between, I am conscious of what I feel in my chest.

W: What are you feeling in your chest?

M: It is different than following the breath. Not a … It isn’t a heartbeat, more like a pulse. A flow? A wave? With two deep breaths, suddenly I notice a vibration in my chest. There is a feeling in my chest and the outer noise is not as challenging as before.

W: So, you are feeling a flow. A calmness. Let it touch you. Pay attention to it and see what happens.

M: May I close my eyes?

W: Of course.

M: The external noise level damps somewhat as I focus internally. It feels like a resonance flowing out. No threat. Rings gently moving out. I’m not consciously sending it out like I do when doing energy work.

Weir then explained, “The intent is to pay attention to what’s happening. If we were to continue longer, I might have asked, What is coming out of heart? Why is the heart expanding? Find out more. Is it new or does it happen all the time? The point is that your own internal guidance chose the direction.”

The Process of 'Becoming' Through the Diamond Approach –

As Taught and Practiced by Lou Weir

"Based on inquiry, the work activates people's wisdom, emotions, and history." When asked the context of 'history', Weir clarified: "The school policy is that there is plenty to work on in this lifetime, no need to take on past lives at this point."

A third major part of the Diamond Approach's chrysalis stage is guidance through The Map of how the "created"-self developed. The founders of the Diamond Approach developed a psychological, emotional, and mental map to spiritual enlightenment. A student chooses a category, such as compassion, to guide introspective experiences. "In examining the quality, we explore if there is a limitation of it. Is something blocking it? In looking at barriers to realization, the barriers fall away," Weir summarized. "Our map includes many places where the 'personality' covers up our essence: anger over strength and aliveness, willfulness over true will, hatred over peace and power are just a few instances."

Working through the entire map, one piece at a time, ensures maximum growth, discovery, and transformation similar to the deconstruction and reconstruction that the one-day butterfly undergoes. Weir continued, "The goal is not to transcend the self, but to metabolize any stuck places—any parts not of ultimate truth. The created, or fictional self is the biggest block to awakening. By refining and sharpening our personality, we understand we are expanded awareness. Personality leads less in our decision-making and behavior, allowing Essence to shine through."

> "Experiences of the mystery of presence can seem magical, such as the opening to the energy of the essential qualities, and the kind of deep non-verbal communication which can occur between attuned individuals."
>
> —Lou Weir

Ridhwan School founder, Hameed Ali, is quoted on the website, explaining the process is ultimately to look at the true nature of reality. "And what is reality without the people or the individual consciousness that knows it?" Developing a non-dualistic view of reality allows the truth that all is connected… "that everything is luminescence and transparent. The true self has no pain, no suffering. Pain is a surface phenomenon." Weir further explained, "The psychodynamic work refines the understanding and reveals the obscurations of the soul to its deepest nature. Much of that works with presence to uncover barriers and unconscious blocks. As the essential nature of the individual is revealed and experienced, then more and more the tendency is for the being to rest in the non-dual [state of understanding]."

As blocks are removed and perspectives shift, "experiences of the mystery of presence can seem magical, such as the opening to the energy of the essential qualities, and the kind of deep non-verbal communication which can occur between attuned individuals," Weir added. "The true qualities of our nature, love, intelligence, peace, compassion, and many other undefiled qualities of our spiritual nature, show through more and more. As we are guided more by our essence, we are more able to connect with the beauty and mystery of life," Weir wrote in the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* (December 2017 pp 78-79).

How long is the process?

Just as the transformation from caterpillar to moth or butterfly can vary from weeks to months, each participant's journey is personalized. There is no "ta da" set graduation date. Inquiry advances solely at the behest of the individual's strength and self-inquiry. The first year of commitment, ten sessions are required. In following years, a minimum of six sessions are deemed necessary for continued, consistent growth.

> Just as the transformation from caterpillar to moth or butterfly can vary from weeks to months, each participant's journey is personalized. There is no "ta da" set graduation date.

Who does it work for? When doesn't it work?

Weir admitted, "It is on-going work and can resolve some personality issues as they become less impactful…if the person stays in the work. Yet, many tend to run or change groups just as they are nearing the more difficult work or tougher questions of self-inquiry. However, others, like myself, stay committed to their groups for 10-20 years."

He continued, "It takes courage to look at different places in one's own life. If you can't be honest and vulnerable, it won't develop. It is important to emphasize, there is no judgement and no competition. You see and let others explore without jealousy of their experiences or rate of transformation. You can't hurry the process nor fake it."

How did the approach come to be?

Hameed Ali and Karen Johnson founded the Ridhwan School for Spiritual Development in 1976. Based in Berkely, California, it is dedicated to helping students realize the True Nature and (per The Diamond Approach website) further still "to endless enlightenment." Ali has formal training in Physics, Johnson in Psychology, and both were inspired to explore spirituality and the connectivity of all life.

(Hameed Ali's pen name is A.H. Almaas, and Almaas has written numerous books on spiritual development, such as *The Diamond Approach*, *The Elements of the Real in Man*, *The Unfolding Now*, *The Pearl Beyond Price, Facets of Unity*, *Love Unveiled*, and *The Point of Existence*. These books have long been available at Crazy Wisdom Bookstore.)

The Diamond Approach is now offered in 19 countries with 237 teachers world-wide, 112 in the United States. Lou Weir is the only registered teacher of the Diamond Approach in Ann Arbor. The only other location in Michigan is in Leland, with Bob Balla and Jeanine Mamary as the teachers (though they have been closed to new members for about 15 years). There are also teachers in Chicago and Wisconsin.

Lou Weir as Student, Teacher, and Writer

Lou Weir started out on a different path. In 1981. Weir graduated from Cooley Law School (now Western Michigan). He worked for a colleague for five years and then began his own practice. During that time, he recognized a dissonance between the values and driving forces he was witnessing in the legal profession with something internal. He began exploring the Diamond approach. He has been a member of the Ridhwan school since 1995 and was ordained in 2017 as a Diamond Approach teacher.

"I began making course corrections over the years and had a very satisfying practice." After 35 successful years in the legal system, he retired, and he's had more time to focus on being a Ridhwan instructor.

"We grow up thinking we are separate selves—conditioning caused this. It's a normal part of development. However, our view is there is further recognition as true being, beyond time and space, untainted by personal decisions. You study the self and then understand the connection to all reality. Part of my mission is to bring this work to Ann Arbor. Teachers of the school regularly travel from their homes to Australia, California, and to Europe to teach. It is an international school with an estimated 5-6,000 students world-wide." There are approximately 60 ongoing students, counting the closed group which meets in southeast Michigan, and new people interested around Ann Arbor.

More training came in 2005 when Weir completed Teacher Training for Vipassana Insight Meditation with Ann Arbor's Deep Spring Center for Meditation, and with its founding teacher, Barbara Brodsky. He has also participated in Zen meditation retreats through the Ann Arbor Zen Temple. Weir explained, "Meditation is the foundation of my life. I enjoy supporting people and working with the meditative practice."

In 2012, Weir co-founded Insight Meditation Ann Arbor with his wife, Susan, and other volunteers. It is a practicing site for Vipassana meditation. As a 501c3 non-profit, it is volunteer-managed and membership led. The group offered once-a-month sittings until the onset of Covid, then they offered online sittings followed by a short talk or sharing, Sundays at 10 AM. These are ongoing with in-person hybrid meetings expected in the next few months depending upon the course of the pandemic.

Lou and Susan Weir enjoy living in Ann Arbor. Susan has a craft and supplies online business and has shared Weir's passion and studies of meditation for many years. Susan, herself, began teaching meditation in 1999. She taught at Deep Spring Center of Ann Arbor from 1999 to 2012, and her own Zen practice is grounded in the Dharma and Vipassana meditation. Though currently on a teaching sabbatical, she continues to study and practice meditation.

The Weirs have two grown sons: Marshall is a computer programmer, and Quentin has his own company with 20 employees making hand-crafted items for roleplaying games. Their newest addition to the family is a kitten named Tycho (after the 15th century astronomer). Relaxing into a huge smile, Weir admits, "I am besotted with it." Weir's other interests include tennis, hiking, and backpacking.

When asked what his latest "work" looks like, Weir described three main aspects of involvement: "I teach meditation, sit with people examining the present moment, and present to groups about The Diamond Approach and The Map."

Weir added, "I've found inner work made a difference in day-to-day life. There is a real joy with being intentional with one's life—both the big and small stuff." Additionally, Weir guides book studies, writes, and offers occasional weekend teachings. As drastically different as the caterpillar is from the developed butterfly (different leg lengths, life goals, and so forth), it is interesting to note scientists have proven that memories experienced as a caterpillar can be carried over to the adult stage. As much transformation as happens during the chrysalis stage, strong emotions and memories are not lost. It is another mystery of Nature which speaks volumes to the power of our emotions and perceptions.

For more information, email diamondworkmichigan@gmail.com. Weir is accepting new students currently.

For More Reading

When asked what articles or movies he would recommend, Lou Weir listed the following:

- **Soul Without Shame by Byron Brown**
- **Taming Your Gremlin by Rick Carson**
- **There is Nothing Wrong with You by Cherie Huber**
- **Unfolding the Soul by Rhea Powers.**

> "I have found inner work made a difference in day-to-day life. There is a real joy with being intentional with one's life—both the big and small stuff."
>
> —Lou Weir

Moving Meditations and Comparative Prayer Forms

An Exploration of Altering One's Consciousness Through Movement

Tai Chi and Qi Gong Master Wasentha Young and students

An often quoted saying, first made famous by Edgar Cayce (The Sleeping Prophet), is "Prayer is talking to God. Meditation is listening to God."

By Michelle McLemore
Photography by Edda Pacifico and others

One day while teaching Tai Chi—somewhere between forms—I was no longer cognizant of my body, my students, the studio, not even time! There was suddenly nothing except delightful whiteness, bliss, and an ethereal consciousness. When I came back to the immediate physical surroundings, I admitted to my students, "Ummmm I lost count. Was that two or three Part the Horse's Mane?" We all laughed. Later, I recalled having had other similar experiences during movement as well as sitting/lying inert.

In 2022, we are seeing the full circle of spiritual exploration finally expanding in the West. Yoga, Tai Chi, ecstatic dance, and other practices advocated by doctors the past 40 years for their physical benefit and "non-religious ties" are now being explored at deeper levels—specifically for the spiritual origin. People seem to be seeking now, more than ever, internal health and peace in addition to physical health.

Come along on an exploration comparing the positive benefits and movements across Yoga, Islam's Salaat, Sufi whirling, Tai Chi, and Qi Gong to discover the ways in which we are more similar than different in motion and mind.

From 2012 to 2017, the Pew Research Center noted a significant increase in spiritual affiliation. That brings the total to 75%, of those surveyed, who identify as spiritual in belief (if not also religious). A growing body of research showing connections between spirituality and physical health makes this a significant discovery. Research studies show spiritual commitment lowers depression, and moderates high blood pressure and hypertension. So, faith is good for the body and the soul? Huh. Shocking. Or not so shocking for those of us who work daily to create balance and health across the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual energy facets of a client.

Most major religions and faith backgrounds agree on basic principles: give up the ego, appreciate but don't attach to worldly aspects, be present in the present experience, feel—and offer—compassion. And how about in physical practice? According to the Pew Religious Landscape Study in 2017, prayer and meditation seem to be the self-sustaining actions involved by the spiritual majority. 57% of people surveyed pray daily while another 12% pray weekly. 58% say they meditate at least once a week with another 11% who meditate once or twice a month.

Perform an Internet image search for "meditation" and you will undoubtedly see someone in lotus pose. Hands may or may not be positioned in a mudra, held at heart center, or resting gently on the folded knees. Eyes are partially or fully closed. The lack of motion falsely implies you must be still for your mind to ascend. But from there, many YouTube videos, counselors, and studio teachers make it seem that all one is doing is breathing deeply, holding good posture, and trying not to attach to any thought. Part of the spiritual-seekers' quest is to learn there is more to it than that.

An often quoted saying, first made famous by Edgar Cayce (The Sleeping Prophet), is "Prayer is talking to God. Meditation is listening to God." Swami Adiswarananda, minister and spiritual leader of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananada Center in New York explains further: "Meditation ends in absorption with the divine…. The seeker does not attain a state of meditation, they are overtaken by it. Like sleep takes over the sleepy."

This delightful state can occur both in seated, still postures, but also during movements. Adiswarananda states there are three states of spontaneous transcendence:

1. You lose yourself in a state of inner absorption; you transcend the idea of time and become oblivious to the lapse of time
2. You transcend place, and become oblivious to your surroundings
3. You transcend I-consciousness and any thoughts about self. You become like an empty stage with the lights on. Detached from the body consciousness. This becomes another state of consciousness–Turiya–state of the self & Atman. A place of peace and bliss.

To clarify, this is a different state of consciousness from what people experience while driving a well-known path. Have you ever suddenly realized you don't recall the last few miles of a drive and your mind had drifted off to visualizing either potential or recent events? Psychology explains this as automaticity. The key difference between automaticity and transcendence through meditation is the merging with a higher state and losing the sense of self identity and self-concerns. Abraham Maslow's work saw this as transcending the self's ego and merging with universal needs.

Regardless of whether the blissful state is achieved, meditation research studies chart healthy gains that we should take more notice of: several studies now conclude that even a few moments a day of meditation for two weeks makes an observable difference in the brain. Over time, it actually increases gray matter (which normally is reduced during aging). It has also positive benefits on attention, memory, verbal fluency, executive function, processing speed, and overall cognitive flexibility. Additionally, meditation has an effect on conflict monitoring and creativity, while also having the same efficacy as antidepressants in reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety. Meditation may even increase the effectiveness of the immune system. Regular practice increases sensory awareness, sense of timelessness, well-being, and peace with self and universe.

Another interesting physiological mark of meditation is that the brain waves literally change to alpha waves and theta waves. According to brainworksneurotherpathy.com, Alpha waves run 8 to 12 Hz and signify a resting state aiding in calmness, mind/body integration, and being present in the moment. Theta waves (3 to 8 Hz) occur in deep meditation connecting to learning, memory, and intuition. We can access information held deeper than our awake consciousness. Some studies have picked up the rare gamma waves (38 to 42 Hz) during meditation studies. Researchers discovered it is highly active in states of universal love and altruism… "a greater presence of gamma relates to expanded consciousness and spiritual emergence."

Additionally, during that sought after blissful transcendent moment, the parietal lobe of the practitioner becomes dormant—showing zero activity. It was documented several times with experienced meditators. Andrew Newberg, a neuroscientist at the University of Pennsylvania, recorded this phenomenon, over a ten-year period, in Franciscan nuns as well as Tibetan Buddhists. Interestingly, the parietal is the area of the brain that is related to sensory information and helps form our sense of self. Research by Shimada, Hiraki, and Oda suggests “the superior portion of the parietal lobe is essential for maintaining one’s own body image.” It stands to hypothesize, if the parietal shuts down during deeper meditation, it would explain why the sense of self dissipates. Thus, the question becomes similar to the chicken and the egg conundrum.

Undoubtedly, it is safer to be stationary while merging with Divinity; however, I propose the early spiritual leaders (consciously or subconsciously) had one’s full health in mind while offering moving meditation and prayer forms as another method of Divine connection.

Hindi Yoga Background

The first reference to yogic principles appears to be in the “Upanishad,” or last chapters of the *Veda* (circa 1300-900 BCE). It is a synthesis of over 200 Hindu scriptures detailing meditation techniques to help someone attune to his or her true Self or Atman. Modern yoga talks about eight limbs or principles:

1. Yama (restraint) covers non-violence, truthfulness, non-covetousness, continence/chastity, and declining gifts/favors.

2. Niyama (observance/discipline) studies cleanliness, contentment, austerity, and study of sacred texts, and surrendering all fruits to the Divine.

3. Asana (posture) explores the various stretches, postures, and flows for physical health.

4. Pranayama (breath control)

5. Pratyahara (withdrawal of the senses from their objects)

6. Dharana (concentration)

7. Dhyana (meditation) moves from through stupefied, restless, distracted, to concentrated and suspended states.

8. Samadhi (contemplation/absorption) is when the mind merges with the object of meditation.

As one can see, the principles cover more than just the physical asanas demonstrated in many westernized studios. However, yoga—similar to martial arts—maintains that in order to control the mind, we must control the body and the senses. Asanas are often practiced prior to meditation to help raise prana (energy) to the crown and quiet the mind.

However, yoga – similar to martial arts – maintains that in order to control the mind, we must control the body and the senses. Asanas are often practiced prior to meditation to help raise prana (energy) to the crown and quiet the mind.

B.K.S. Iyengar is considered one of the foremost yoga gurus of the modern world (b. 1918, d. 2014 in India). In his 2001 manual *Yoga: The Path to Holistic Health*, he wrote “When there is perfect harmony between body and mind, we achieve self-realization… Spiritual awareness flows into the student during phases... One moves from the physical practice (arambhavastha) through merging phases to reach the fourth phase of nishpattyavastha — the state of perfection where “I” ceases to exist. (Remember what I said earlier about goals of meditation?)

“The ultimate goal of yoga is the union of the individual self (jivatma) with the universal self (paramatma). Self-realization is Samadhi. Samadhi involves jnana marg (path to knowledge—what is real vs. unreal), karmamarg (selfless service), bhakti marg (love and devotion), and yoga marg (path to whole mind and actions brought under control).”

Physical Benefits

In a 2011 review published in the *International Journal of Yoga*, Catherine Woodyard summarized the numerous studies which found significant physical gains from practicing yoga. They included that yogic practices enhance muscular strength and body flexibility, builds muscle strength, promote and improve respiratory and cardiovascular function, promote recovery from and treatment of addiction, reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and chronic pain, improve sleep patterns, and enhance overall well-being and quality of life. A 2021 article in *Yoga Journal* additionally noted that yoga builds muscle strength, prevents cartilage breakdown, increases blood flow and bone health, drains the lymph nodes, boosts the immune system, decreases pain, and improves emotional balance.

The Most Known Yoga Flow

An ancient practice was the Sandhya-upasana, or the dawn and twilight sun salutations. This flow (taught as part of a typical vinyasa flow class today) “strings together (sutra) body, breath, mind, and soul with the healing and nurturing forces of the sun, and infuses life with serenity and inner awakening” wrote Pandit Rajmani Tigunait and Sandra Anderson in an article for Yoga International.

Four cycles of the sun salutation are common and, Tigunait and Anderson claim, doing so “fans your digestive fire, energizes the nervous system, balances your pranic flow [internal energy flow], activates both the lower and upper extremities, and influences your moods.”

Four cycles of the sun salutation is common and doing so “fans your digestive fire, energizes the nervous system, balances your pranic flow [internal energy flow], activates both the lower and upper extremities, and influences your moods.”

The asanas traditionally associated with the salutation consist of mountain/namaste, overhead stretch, standing forward fold, lunge, plank pose, eight-point pose, cobra pose, downward facing dog, lunge, standing forward fold, overhead stretch/mountain, and namaste.

For the full spiritual minded yoga practitioner, there are mantras associated with each asana of the sun salutation. See the side bar for the list of Mantras provided by MedIndia on page 79**.**

Local Yoga Practitioner Perspective

Elisabeth Sötebeer

Elisabeth Sötebeer, yoga teacher at the Rudolf Steiner School and Sequoia Senior center in Ann Arbor, agreed to share more on the physical, energetic, and spiritual aspects of yoga.

In teaching classic hatha yoga, “we follow the lineage of ancient wisdom with a pure form of yoga. We begin with relaxation, visualization, special breathing techniques (pranayama), poses, and gradual stretching so we warm up before deeply stretching. Through breathing we relax into the poses.”

She continued, “Depending upon the group, I may introduce the eight branches of instruction. However, I use gentle terms on how we incorporate it. I may discuss meditation, relaxation, good deeds, nature, and how yoga postures open the chakra centers (energy portals) and inner gateways named nadis. Of the 72,000 nadis in the body, we focus on the opening up of the major ones along the spine so the wheels [chakras] can spin in the right direction to move the incoming energy upward from the base of the spine toward the head.”

I may discuss meditation, relaxation, good deeds, nature, and how yoga postures open the chakra centers (energy portals) and inner gateways named nadis.
– Yoga instructor Elisabeth Sötebeer

“When we offer yoga, we focus on asanas (postures) which focus on positivity. We use affirmations to raise the energy [from feet to] above the head. “At the lower energy centers, we work out releasing feelings of greed, resentment, anger. At the heart we feel it begin to open with joy, expression, enthusiasm, wanting to give. When we move to the throat, we open up channels for creativity and speech. As we move up to the forehead, Anja chakra, we connect with peace within, a quietness of mind. By the time we have raised the energy to the crown, there is the feeling of “I am just the way I am”—no attachment to anything from the outside. It is a beautiful place to be—to radiate calm, peace, and joy at the Crown chakra, Sahasrara.”

Does all yoga always bring the energy flow all the way through the crown? Sötebeer laughed. “Are we always there? No—that would be enlightenment. We have moments. We can remember these spaces of bliss, recognize, and desire to return. It urges one to put in the effort and move forward. Yoga helps to have a life of meditation, more moments in the day you notice you are improving, more calm, more aware of what you are doing, mindfulness, the connection with the Higher Self and Universe. When you tune in to that, it flows. You know when you are restless, you are holding things. When you offer yoga—you release points which you are holding.”

When asked about specific poses that may assist chakra opening or heightened states of transcendence, Sötebeer explained Child’s Pose helps connect the third eye to earth in the bowing down to your higher self, and you release and open. Resting

Moving Meditations and Comparative Prayer Forms

poses, like Child's Pose, "are as important as active poses. They help bring about the balance."

Sötebeer first found her way to yoga after a relationship ended and a sudden decreased ability in her right leg. Despite medical consultation and physical therapy, she was still shuffling after three months. Something nudged her to take matters into her own hands. After a year of yoga and reiki she became pain free. Sötebeer has been practicing now for over 40 years and has been teaching yoga since 2004. She was trained through the School of Royal Yoga and has taken additional trainings in Reiki, meditation, health, wellness, and how to connect with the higher self/universe.

Sötebeer offers meditation guidance by phone and in person and is willing to travel to the client's home or a common space for the sessions. Some of her classes are chair yoga for seniors while others are mat classes. Additionally, she is open for Reiki sessions and teaches Reiki 1 as well as Introduction to Meditation. She can be reached at elisabeth.sotebeer@gmail.com or 949-433-9116.

Young muslim is on his knees praying. It is one of the movements in prayer called Salat.

Interestingly, the similarity between Salat and yoga forms has been noted by the international research community and now multiple studies have found similar health benefits—enough to give rise to the term "Islamic yoga" by members of the Islamic community.

Islam's Salaat/Salat/Salah Background

The general agreement is that the principles of Islam coalesced in the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed in the seventh century (approximately 613 AD when he began preaching). The Qur'an/Koran—believed to have been written by Muhammad's scribes shortly after his death in 632 AD—establishes the practice of praying at five specific hours of the day. The Qur'an compiles information from the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) as well as sacred revelations taught to Muhammad through visits with the Archangel Gabriel.

Salat Moving Prayer Form

There are five pillars of the Muslim faith, with Salat (the moving prayer form) as the second main pillar. (Salat/Salah originates from the Arabic word 'Silah.' The translation is "connection with The God.")

1. **Shahada:** to declare one's faith in God and belief in Muhammad
2. **Salat**: to pray five times a day (at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening)
3. **Zakat**: to give to those in need
4. **Sawm**: to fast during Ramadan
5. **Hajj**: to make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once during a person's lifetime if the person is able

Each of the day's prayer sequences are very similar, only varying in the number of units (repetitions of cycle), or Rak'ahs. Each Rak'ah unit is comprised of seven to nine postures. The early morning prayer (Fajr—just prior to sunrise) has two units, the two afternoon (Zuhr—just after noontime and 'Asr—late afternoon) and night prayer ('Isha—anytime at night) have four units and the sunset prayer (Maghrib—just after sunset) has three. "A practicing Muslim if he offers FARD (Compulsory) Salah alone, repeats these Rak'ah a minimum of 17 times every day. The number of total Rakʿah is approximately 48 Rak'ahs per day which includes all mandatory and optional Rak'ah" (Kamran, 2018).

Most Muslims can complete a series of two Rak'ah in in 3-6 minutes. Researcher Ghakan Kamran discovered, "For an 80 kg person, the energy cost of daily prayers was about 80 calories per day, and could be considered a form of physical activity that enhances fitness."

Research Studies on Physical Health Benefits

Though less studies have been done in comparison to the effects of yoga, the number of studies regarding the impact of Islamic yoga is increasing. One study (carried out by University Malaya's biomedical engineering department) showed that the 'Ru'ku' and 'prostration' positions helped to relax the spinal canal and reduced the risk of pressure on the spinal nerve. Additional studies reveal Salat makes muscles contract isometrically and isotonically and that followers of the Muslim faith have a range of motion of 139.5° in comparison to non-faith followers who have typically 102.5° of range (Nazish and Kalra, 2018). Also, heartbeat rate proved to be able to be reduced by 10 times a minute during prostration .

Analysis of Salat ul-Fajr, the early morning prayer flow, shows the basic, yet meaningful, postures and poses involved: Takbir, Qayyam, Ruku, Qayyam, Sajdah/Sujud/Sujood, Jalsa/Tashahhud, Sajjdah/Sujud/Sujood, Jalsa/Tashahhud, and Salam.

Interestingly, the similarity between Salat and yoga forms has been noted by the international research community and now multiple studies have found similar health benefits—enough to give rise to the term "Islamic yoga" by members of the Islamic community. Several Muslim-authored articles are advancing the idea that practicing Salat, even without the prayers, will provide similar physical health benefits for any practitioner and should be considered as a viable physical fitness routine for anyone around the world akin to Yoga or Pilates.

How do the two forms align?

Salat	Yoga
Takbir (standing with hands by ears)	Tadasana aka Mountain (Standing pose with hands at sides or above head)
Qayyam (Standing arms crossed at heart/waist)	Namaste (Standing pose/ hands at heart center)
Ru' ku(bow/ half forward fold)	Ardha Uttansana aka half forward fold
Sajdah/Sujud/Sujood (7-point prostration)	Balasana aka Child's pose (a 7-point prostration)
Jalsa/Tashahhud (sitting back on feet with toes activated)	Varjasana aka Thunderbolt variation/Toe Squat/Rock pose variation (sitting back on feet with toes activated)
Salam (turning head to wish "peace")	Neck stretch left and right

Accompanying prayers & spiritual/energy aspects

Just as there are prayers or mantras to say during traditional yoga asana flows, for the practicing Muslim, there are set prayers for each position as well. More in-depth explanation of the symbolism of each position can be found at IslamicSufism.com but see our sidebar on page 80 for a few examples.

Amira Ayad explained in a 2018 article for AboutIslam.net "Prophet Mohammed said: 'Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh which, if it be whole, all the body is whole and which, if it be diseased, all of it is diseased. Truly it is the heart. Piety resides here,' and he pointed to his chest." The word piety, or *Taqwa,* in Arabic comes from the root *wiqaya*, which means to protect, prevent, or avoid harm. Being pious is consciously performing good deeds and avoiding all evil acts seeking Allah's satisfaction. Ayad explained, "The entire philosophy of prayer in Islam is that it is a way for the individual to elevate his or her mind to seek God… And again, to keep this heart balance, we need constant reminders, and what could be better than Qur'an recitation and constant *dhikr Allah"* (divine remembrances).

This focus is emphasized by the Qur'annic term Khushu—being fully present (body, mind, and spirit) before the Divine Presence in prayer. It is such a conscious objective that once prayer and the flow begins there can be no interruptions or distractions of even the mind, or else the practitioner must begin again.

Though there is some disagreement among Muslims about the existence of the subtle energy anatomy (chakras, nadis, etc.), researchers in the community have been publishing about the impact of Salat on the energy anatomy. *The International*

Journal of Science Culture and Sport summarized that, “Even each (Salat) position has some similarity with (a) corresponding yoga position and the positions together activate all seven chakras in the body as per yoga practices… Each of the chakras correlates to major nerve ganglia that branch forth from the spinal column” (Roaf et al., 2014).

“Sujud is said to activate the crown chakra which is related to a person’s spiritual connection with the universe around them and their enthusiasm for spiritual pursuits. This nerve pathway is also correlated to the health of the brain and pineal gland. Its healthy function balances one’s interior and exterior energies” (Roaf et al.,2014). Similar to still meditation, researchers found the occipital and parietal regions were influenced on the parasympathetic index, suggesting that regular Salat practices may help promote relaxation, minimize anxiety, and reduce cardiovascular risk.

“During Prostration, specifically, dissipation of the electromagnetic energy accumulated from the atmosphere takes place by the grounding effect at regular intervals resulting in a calming feeling. A recent study investigating the alpha brain activity during Muslim prayers has reported increased amplitude in the parietal and occipital regions suggestive of parasympathetic elevation, thus indicating a state of relaxation” (Doufesh, 2012). (Remember, the researchers found this also with the Tibetan monks and nuns!) Awareness of frequency changes and the need for grounding the electrical nature of the body has also been explored by Kanat Eleyoun. By using a turba (wooden disc or item from nature) at the forehead, it helps reset the body during Sujuud, making the posture even more healthful physically and spiritually.

Participating in the multiple moving meditations throughout the day seems to keep Muslim practitioners in better physical health while offering a higher possibility for reaching calmer states of mind than those with less movement

Sufism Whirling Background

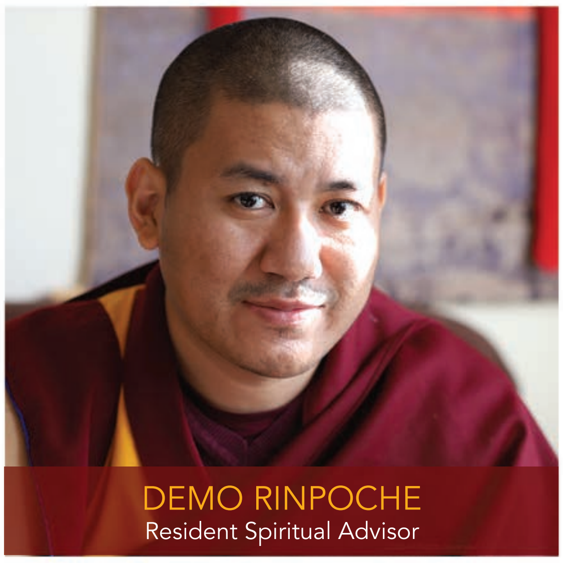
“Dancers wear long white robes with full skirts, which symbolize the shrouds of their egos… On the dancers’ heads sit tall conical felt hats called sikke, ranging from brown to gray to black depending on their sect; these represent the tombstones of their egos. Over the robes, the dancers wear long dark cloaks, which embody the wearer’s worldly life, and these are cast off during the ceremony. When the dancer is finally wearing only his long white robe, he is assumed to be without fault and ready to start the mesmerizing complex whirls that define the Sema.”

Though there is a lack of clarity as to whether Sufism arose specifically as a mystical pursuit of Muslims or if it had origins predating Islam, the early Umayyad period (661-749 AD) has several recordings of Sufis demonstrating their anti-worldliness. Sufi (which came to mean ‘mystic’), in fact, comes from the Arabic word *ṣūf* for wool which followers wore for simplicity. Known for renouncing worldly possessions, Sufis came to be known as the poor/*fuqarāʾ*. In Arabic—*faqīr*, in Persian—*darvīsh*. Hence the English words fakir and dervish (Brittanica).

- According to *Understanding Islam: The Complete Idiot’s Guide* by Yahiya Emerick, there are four basic principles:
- Faith in God can be experienced by the devoted believer through a program consisting of meditation, changing, selfless love for others, and self-denial.
- Worldly possessions, if not kept to a minimum, can corrupt a person’s soul. Frugality is the key to spiritual wealth.
- The path of Sufism requires its followers to develop patience, thankfulness to God, and a complete reliance on God’s knowledge of the future.

JEWEL HEART
TIBETAN BUDDHIST LEARNING CENTER

STUDY. PRACTICE. CONNECT.
We provide opportunities for all levels of interest
from basic meditation to vajrayana practice.
In-Person participation registration options available.



DEMO RINPOCHE
Resident Spiritual Advisor

FREE WEEKLY PROGRAMS • TEACHINGS • MEDITATION
GROUP PRACTICE & DISCUSSION • WEEKEND WORKSHOPS
GUEST SPEAKERS • RETREATS • INITIATIONS • PILGRIMAGES

Watch Live. Stream Later.
Free book when you join mailing list. Visit jewelheart.org

Sun Salutation Mantras from MedIndia

Om Mitraaya Namaha	Praise be to the One who is friend of all
Om Ravaye Namaha	Praise be to the One who shines brightly and is filled with radiance
Om Suryaaya Namaha	Praise be to the One who eliminates darkness and brings in light
Om Bhaanave Namaha	Praise be to the One who is filled with brilliance and lustre
Om Khagaya Namaha	Praise be to the One who traverses the entire sky and is all-pervasive
Om Pooshne Namaha	Praise be to the One who provides nourishment and fulfils desires
Om Hiranyagarbhaaya Namaha	Praise be to the One with a golden-hued lustre
Om Mareechaye Namaha	Praise be the One who shines with the light of innumerable rays
Om Adityaaya Namaha	Praise be the One who is the son of the divine cosmic mother, Aditi
Om Savitre Namaha	Praise be the One who gives life
Om Aarkaaya Namaha	Praise be the One who is worthy of all glory
Om Bhaskaraaya Namaha	Praise be the One who is wise and illuminates the heavenly world

- In addition to the Qur’an and hadiths, another body of wisdom is contained in the teachings of the great Sufi masters. These consist of poems and wisdom stories that have hidden meanings.

Just as other religions have grown and changed, Sufism developed different branches. “Universal Sufism” came to the Americas in the 1920s with Inayat Khan (a Sufi leader of the Sufi Chishtia lineage). Inayat Khan, however, taught that “Sufism and Sufi practices pre-date Islam and have their root in multiple ancient traditions such as Christian mystics of Syria and Egypt, the Essenes, the ancient Pythagorean orders, and the mystery schools of the Egyptians and Zoroastrians, among others” (*The Origins of Sufism*). Khan, thus, referred to Universal Sufism as “the wisdom of all faiths.”

Moving Meditations and Comparative Prayer Forms

Accompanying Prayers for Salat

Takbir	“Allāhu akbar” : Allah is the greatest
Qayhham	optional Istiftah Du’a (opening prayer), Surah Al-Fatiha (this Surah is recited in each Rak’ah), and any other surah or any part of the Qu’ran
Ru’ku	“Allāhu Akbar” + “Subhanna Rabbiyal Adheem” three times: Glorious is my Lord the most great.
Qayhham	While rising, recite “Samiallah Huliman Hamidah”: Allah hears those who praise Him. While standing up, recite “Rabana Walakal Hamd”: Our Lord, all praise is for you, once. Optional add, “Hamdan Katheeran Tayyiban Mubaarakan Feeh” : Praise which is abundant, excellent and blessed.
Sajdah/Sujud/Sujood	“Allāhu Akbar” + “Subhanna Rabbiyal A’laa”: Glorious is my Lord, the most High, three times.
Jalsa/Tashahhud	“Allaahumma-ghfir lee warhamnee wajburnee, warfa’nee, wa ‘aafinee war’zuqnee “ : O Allah, forgive me, have mercy on me, strengthen me, raise me in status, pardon me and grant me provision.
Sajdah/Sujud/Sujood	“Subhanna Rabbiyal A’laa”: Glorious is my Lord, the most High) three times.
	Additional prayers depending on which cycle you are on.
Salam	Recite any tashahhud, durood, and any du’a. End the prayer by: Turning your head to the right and saying, “As-salamu alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu” :The angel who records your good deeds is to this side. Turn your head to the left and say, “As-salamu alaykum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakaatuhu”: The angel who records your wrongful deeds is to this side.

There are several sister or sub-orders within the Inayati umbrella, such as the Raphaelite healing order and the Sufi Order International. Another offshoot is the Sufi Ruhaniat International, established by Murshid Sam in California in the late 1960’s. Murshid Sam established the Dances of Universal Peace.

Achieving enlightenment by a Sufi practitioner incorporates four main points:

- Chanting God’s names and praises in unison while seated in a circle or standing and turning slowly (the whirling meditation)
- Fasting, Qur’an reading, and meditation in remote, natural places often in the early morning
- Prayer at night with frequent supplications for knowledge and forgiveness
- Sitting at the feet of a shaykh (leader) listening to his or her teachings and stories, and then contemplating the meanings

> **“There are many roads which lead to God.**
> **I have chosen the one of dance and music.”**
> **– Rumi**

Moving Prayer Form

The meditation most often associated with the SufI is the whirling dervish ceremony. Sufi mystic poet Jalaluddin Rumi of the 13th century is said to have begun the moving meditation. He supposedly told his followers, “There are many roads which lead to God. I have chosen the one of dance and music.” He would fast, meditate, and then dance to reach a state of unparalleled enlightenment. By the 15th century, the order had established rules for the ritual which had come to be called “Sema.”

According to Nurhan Atasoy in her book *Dervis Ceyizi,* even the clothing selected for the meditation is rich with symbolism. “Dancers wear long white robes with full skirts, which symbolize the shrouds of their egos… On the dancers’ heads sit tall conical felt hats called sikke, ranging from brown to gray to black depending on their sect; these represent the tombstones of their egos. Over the robes, the dancers wear long dark cloaks, which embody the wearer’s worldly life, and these are cast off during the ceremony. When the dancer is finally wearing only his long white robe, he is assumed to be without fault and ready to start the mesmerizing complex whirls that define the Sema.”

Cara Tabachnick witnessed a sema in person and described it for *Washington Post* readers: “The dancers, who fast for many hours before the ceremony, start to turn [counter-clock-wise] in rhythmic patterns, using the left foot to propel their bodies around the right foot with their eyes open, but unfocused. Their whirling is fueled by accompanying music, which consists of a singer, a flute-player, a kettle drummer, and a cymbal player. As the dancers turn, the skirts of their robes rise, becoming circular cones, as if standing in the air on their own volition. A team of researchers found that the edges of spinning skirts experience accelerations ‘of about four times Earth gravity,’ reporting that the skirts ‘carry cusped wave patterns which seem to defy gravity and common sense.’”

Per a video of a demonstration done at the Galata Mevlivihanesi Muzesi in Turkey, the ritual begins as a leader brings a prayer mat into the circle. Each dancer performs a Ru’ku (half forward fold) at the entrance to the dance arena. When the dancers are in line at the side, the leader performs Sujud toward the high balcony. The others alternately offer additional Ru’kus to the center and bows to each other, then crossing arms across their chests, they take places around the room.

This moving meditation, like the others, is a model example of dhikr—an invocation done with one’s entire being. Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee explains in her book *Catching the Thread*, “Individually, each dervish, or semazen, is turning toward the truth, opening to it. Head tilted to one side, out of the way. One arm is held high in another world, and another held low in this world. With each turn, he or she says silently, “Allah, Allah.” The dervishes orbit one another, recreating the movement of the heavens.” It is both, at once, grounding and expanding of the individual physically, energetically, and spiritually.

> **Was it purely to distinguish their energy centers differently than the Hindu yogic tradition which is considered haram (not acceptable) by many clerics? Or did the Sufi identify additional chakras and focused only on the ones, in their opinion, related to higher spirituality?**

In *Man Seeks God*, Eric Weiner interviewed a dancer, Shams Shirley, who elaborated on the transcendent feeling which occurs during the turning: “You turn in your heart. When you are in it, really in it, you have one foot in this world and one foot in another. You feel like you can do it forever. You rip open from the inside out. It can happen very slowly or sometimes it feels like a fast fall.” He went on that after so many experiences, you turn [inside] while sitting still.

Energetic Aspects

In Arabic, universal energy flow is called “Qudra”— the human body’s light. It was recorded as visible and oft referenced by the Prophet when he asked Allah to regulate the light in his body and or increase it for him (33:45-46).

Beyond the apparent posture and balance necessary to complete repetitive turns, Amanda Solk, of the National Federation of Spiritual Healers, claims the dance “stimulate[s] the activity of the pineal and pituitary glands, releasing endorphins and

✓Reduce stress ✓Relieve pain
✓Stabilize cortisol ✓Reduce anxiety
✓Increase well-being ✓Backed by science
SYMMETRY
BIOFIELD THERAPY
symmetrybiofield@gmail.com
symmetrybiofield.com

serotonin. Such effects on the brain reduce the need for mood-elevating substances and cause a sense of ecstasy to occur" (Prince M Mohamed, 2020).

The pineal and pituitary glands are physically located in the area of Ajna, the brow chakra in Yogic subtle anatomy—associated with intuition and foresight. Sufi tradition outlines some similar and some different energy portals in what is known as the Subtleties—Lataif-e-sitta—associated with soul (Rooh) health. Similar to chakras, the Lataif are centers of energy intake in the body and vital for balance within the body systems. Also similar to Islam, each Lataif center is associated with a Qu'ranic established prayer time as that is when the point is "most active."

Sanskrit brow chakra/3rd eye of intuition is known as Kafhi. It has connotations of peace, stillness, and perception. Then, comes the major difference: whereas in the Hindu tradition the chakras align vertically up the spine for optimum health and moving kundalini energy up the spine to Divine release at the crown, Sufi recognize power centers across the mid-chest/ heart region. "Sirr" (the ultimate secret), Qalb (the heart), and Ruh (the soul). Sirr is the bridge between the physical and the metaphysical. Spiritual advancement here requires putting constrictions on nafs (similar location to the solar plexus and sacral) and Qalb. Master these and Ruh and its spiritual mysteries will open.

But as is the nature of mysteries, they are built upon further mysteries. A 1982 research paper, by Marcia Hermansen, explores a more elaborate subtle energy system outlined by Shah Wali Allah.

Was it purely to distinguish their energy centers differently than the Hindu yogic tradition which is considered haram (not acceptable) by many clerics? Or did the Sufi identify additional chakras and focused only on the ones, in their opinion, related to higher spirituality? More research is necessary. For instance, Valerie Hunt identified frequencies at the traditional chakras higher than could be attributed to the brain, heart, or any organs. Testing for unusual frequencies at the Sufi sites could add more legitimacy and cause other esoteric groups to perform more focused studies of these spots.

Local Practitioner Perspective

Judy Lee (Nur-un-nisa) Trautman has led Dances of Universal Peace in the Universal Sufi tradition in Ann Arbor. She explained, "In the 1960s, Disciple Samuel Lewis had a vision from God to minister to hippies. He created five dances, led groups in his garage, and 50 years later we're dancing over 500 dances created globally." Trautman continued that they are "simple folk steps based on traditional folk dances and influenced by modern dance created at that time." After Samuel Lewis' death, the dances were codified to keep the authenticity, similar to how prior Sufi leaders wrote down the Sema to keep it unified in practice.

To become a certified dance leader, one must go through training and retain a mentor, but does not have to be a Sufi initiate. Trautman explained her process. "I was mentored for three years and certified. My mentors in Ann Arbor moved back to California and they gifted me the dance circle—a great honor. She became the group's fifth leader. She has since started a second dance circle in Toledo, Ohio.

> **"As the group leader, I am fortunate to be in the center for much of the dance. In the center you get the reflected glow of everyone. The faces of the dancers glow enough to be captured in photos."**
>
> **– Judy Trautman, who leads Sufi Dancing circles in Ann Arbor**

What philosophy is brought to a dance? "I try to reflect the authenticity of the dances but also the world religions they represent." Prior to Covid, she led first Friday of the month dances in Ann Arbor. Then, during the uncertain initial times of the pandemic, offerings moved online. She laughed. "It's kind of nuts to lead dances on Zoom where everyone has to dance in their living room, but after 4-5 months, a small courageous group formed. Between meditation, dances, reflections, sharing from the soul, and praying for each other, we discovered over Zoom we could still be [spiritually] intimate and greatly helpful to each other."

When asked, Trautman acknowledged they do a couple of dances similar to the whirling dervish order. "It is amazingly spiritual—the connection those dancers have. But it takes a lot of practice to twirl and whirl for an hour without getting dizzy and keeping rhythm with musicians." However, she finds the Sufi or Peace dances which her group does are very healing.

For example, on most New Year's Eve her group comes together to dance. "As the group leader, I am fortunate to be in the center for much of the dance. In the center you get the reflected glow of everyone. The faces of the dancers glow enough to be captured in photos." The healing dances are ones choreographed by Murshid (teacher) Samuel Lewis. Trautman explained, "During the circular flow, I invite each person into the center which is the receptive position. It takes a while, but we carry it on long enough to allow all participants to stay as long as they need."

Many indigenous traditions hold that when an individual or a group moves in a circle, it generates energy. Focusing that energy collectively into the center, the recipient would be bathed in higher frequencies from all angles and planes.

What states of spiritual enlightenment did Trautman find through dance? She graciously explained. "I meditate through movement and sound. That's why I've grown into the dances so readily. I have an active monkey mind so sitting quietly doesn't work for me. But if I'm moving, singing, and responding to music, then it happens. I transcend the mind and body stuff and I just go there."

Still non-movement meditation has fed her insight for dances. One day she was supposed to be reading and meditating for 20-30 minutes. Trautman admitted, "During this time, I cheat. A tune comes to me, and I sing it in my head and that helps me. One time, sitting in meditation, I heard a tune I didn't recognize. It was stunning. I listened to it and tried putting the words 'meta sutra' (loving, kindness) to it, but it didn't fit. I sat with the tune and was led to use the Arabic words for Sufism: 'There is nothing but God' and that worked. So, then I was singing it in my head and inventing a dance. I could hardly wait to get home and write it down. It became the most complete dance I've ever created. I taught it to my circle, and they loved it. It was all very sweet. The dances have done that for me. It is a community experience."

In addition to leading the dances, Trautman has become more involved in leading services. "My life's work currently is being a founding member of the Ohio council. For 20 years we have been gathering the diverse faith traditions of NW Ohio together." The goal is to "transcend the borders that religious traditions built. I always felt it was the mystics among us that always met in the center somehow. We may use different forms to access the Divine, but we have something genuinely in common. We witness that in universal worship."

So, what does a Universal Worship service look like? "There are eight or nine different authentic groups who do readings, music, and poetry in a service. We do a theme each month and it is amazing to hear similar words coming out of the different religious representatives. We experience it. We don't have to be told it [how similar we all believe]."

She laughed and explained that as an ordained minister, doing it online [during the shut-down] was easier than dancing online. Her website has reached 4,000 viewers over 15 months. However, they are optimistically hoping to return to in-person sessions soon. Trautman clarified: "I'm not looking for fame. I just want hearts to come together."

Trautman is the Chairman of the MultiFaith Council of Northwest Ohio and greater Toledo Compassionate Community. She is also a minister of the Sufi Ruhaniat International, which is one branch of Universal Sufism founded in the lineage of Inayat Khan. Trautman is also an honorary board member of the North American Interfaith Network. Additionally, she is currently mentoring in Ann Arbor. She can be reached at (419) 475-6535 or emailed at jltrautman@sbcglobal.net.

Moving Meditations and Comparative Prayer Forms

Tai Chi is one of the traditional martial arts in China. It is named after a philosophy term meaning, "in all changes exists Tai Chi, which causes the two opposites in everything." Tai Chi is sometimes described as the moving form of Qi Gong. Whereas yoga asanas are done to prepare for meditation, Qi Gong is often done prior to Tai Chi. The eight brocades are a series of active Qi Gong exercises, each one focuses upon clearing a different energy meridian in the body. Tai Chi, on the other hand, is a continuous flow that works the entire body.

Taoism, Tai Chi, & Qi Gong basic history

Termed the philosophy of "the people" Taoism is said to have developed from various religious and philosophical traditions (like shamanism and nature religions) in ancient China as far back as the 4th century BCE. The main emphasis is living in harmony with Tao, or The Way—the source and substance of all that exists. Influential texts where Taoist principles can be found include the *I Ching*, writings about the School of Yinyang (aka the School of Naturalists), the writings of Chinese legalist philosopher Shen Buhaif, The *Tao Te Ching* (attributed to Lao Tzu), and the writings of Zhuangzi.

Depending upon the particular Taoist school or branch, there may be some variance in basic principles, but most align with the following:

- Wu Wei (action without intention)
- naturalness
- simplicity
- spontaneity
- The Three Treasures: compassion, frugality, and humility.

Qi Gong and Tai Chi are the two most widely known Chinese moving meditations and are both part of a traditional Chinese health regimen and martial arts training. Sources disagree on the actual earliest origin of Qi Gong. Some say its elements are present in the Huangdi Neijing book of internal medicine, which claims its authorship

Universal Moving Meditation & Mantras

Common Name	Affirmation	Optional Mantra
Three steps forward.		
Low hands Mountain	"I stand ready and am supported."	"I stand ready before you."
Fan hands upward to prayer hand Mountain, lower prayer hands to brow. Lean slightly forward.	"I honor and join with Divine vision."	"I connect with your vision."
Lower prayer hands to heart. Lean slightly forward more.	"I am loved and give love unconditionally."	"I am grateful to reside in your Love."
Half-forward fold/Ru'ku	"I bow respecting the greater good."	"I bend my will to benefit the All."
Forward fold to table, to Child's pose/Sujuud	"I am grounded and hear universal wisdom"	"Forgive my weakness" OR "Help me to …"
Rock pose/ Tashahhud	"I am understood and communicate clearly."	"I seek to understand and be understood."
Return to child's pose/Sujuud	"I am grounded and listening."	"I listen and rest in you."
Pull palms to sides of head, lift into downward dog.	"I am flexible in thought, action, and relationships."	"Flexibility provides more peace than attachment."
Step/hop forward. Low hand Mountain Stance.	"I stand ready and am supported."	"Thank you. I stand ready to serve."
Raise one hand to mouth, turn neck to side. Repeat other side.	"Peace to all." 2x	"We are one. Peace to all."
Three steps backward. Optional bow.	Three steps backward. Optional bow.	Three steps backward. Optional bow.

falls between 400 BCE and 220 CE. The Taoist Sanctuary proposes Qi Gong originated in dances of early Wu shaman, meant to induce trance states for communicating with the spirit world. Later, it is hypothesized Hua To's *Frolic of the Five Animals* synthesized the Chinese Medicine Theory of Channels (meridians) and the "Three Burning Spaces" (today called the Dantiens).

Energy & Spiritual Aspects

"Qi" in Chinese translates to breath/spirit/energy. When the mind, heart, or body refuses to let go, tension, worry, and angst block the Qi flow and this causes health concerns. "Qi Gong" is breath/energy work. There are both passive and active practices incorporating exercise postures and breath work. Some say that in Taoism, Qi Gong is a way of attempting physical and spiritual immortality.

Tai Chi is one of the traditional martial arts in China. It is named after a philosophy term meaning, "in all changes exists Tai Chi, which causes the two opposites in everything." Tai Chi is sometimes described as the moving form of Qi Gong. Whereas yoga asanas are done to prepare for meditation, Qi Gong is often done prior to Tai Chi. The eight brocades are a series of active Qi Gong exercises, each one focuses upon clearing a different energy meridian in the body. Tai Chi, on the other hand, is a continuous flow that works the entire body.

Buddhist temple monks were believed to practice Tai Chi for both health and self-defense. Important families each held and passed down their own Tai Chi sequences. However, according to Tom Rogers, President of the Qi Gong Institute, "Qi Gong is not the pursuit of metaphysical or transcendental experience. It is a state of mindfulness and awareness." The sharpening and awakening of presence in the present *is* the objective.

In 1956, the Chinese Sports Committee asked four Tai Chi teachers to collaborate and create a shortened 24 Form of Tai Chi for the populace to help with universal health.

Moving Form

Regardless of whether you are doing a moving form of Qi Gong, or Tai Chi, the goal is to sink one's Qi from the Tan Dien/Dantien into the earth. There are three Tan Dien/Dantian energy points. Each is believed to be an energy harnessing and storage site. The three locations are the lower Dantian which is just below the naval, one at heart level, and the upper Dantian at the brow or between the eyebrows. Good posture is aligning all three of these over the soles of your feet and remaining relaxed. Learn more about Dantians at taichibasics.com/three-dantians.

There are five main Tai Chi styles based on the founding family or teacher. Depending upon the style, the number of forms in a sequence also varies from 24 to 108. Qi Gong also has options of flows and lengths.

Slightly similar to Whirling, Wild Goose Qi Gong uses circular and spiral movements. It is meant to be a fluid, nearly effortless continuous movement. With flowing movements, it is meant to foster peace, relaxation, and joyful meditation while activating the acupoints of the feet to assist energy flow through the major meridian paths.

Slightly similar to Whirling, Wild Goose Qi Gong uses circular and spiral movements. It is meant to be a fluid, nearly effortless continuous movement. With flowing movements, it is meant to foster peace, relaxation, and joyful meditation while activating the acupoints of the feet to assist energy flow through the major meridian paths.

Comparing its flows to other cultures' postures has limited value. However, Yoga's Tree is similar to Marching pose as a Tai Chi warm up. Standing Palm Tree (Vrksasana) and Forward Fold (Uttanasana) can be seen in Wild Goose's 64 movements. In Tai Chi, Form 13 (Kick with Heel) is similar to Utthita Hasta Padangusthasana. Additional forms incorporate similar moves to yoga such as Lunges, Goddess pose (Utkata Konasana), and Warrior I (Virabhadrasana). Others have also compared Mountain pose (Tadasana) with Qayuum in Islam Salaat and "Return to the Mountain" in Tai Chi. So, we would expect to see similar physical benefits across different 'platforms' or modalities.

Physical Benefits

Research studies have found several physical benefits for incorporating Tai Chi into one's life: improving balance, preventing falls, pain reduction in rheumatoid arthritis cases, coronary disease rehabilitation, improving breathing for those with long-term lung problems, and stress-management. An additional study has shown that physical exercises like Tai Chi increase cognitive function and delay deterioration connected with dementia. And for the calorie conscious? According to *Taoism for Dummies*, Tai Chi burns 280 calories per hour. For a comparison, downhill skiing is said to burn 350.

A growing body of research on Qi Gong also shows benefits: depression reduction, stress-management, reduction of chronic-fatigue, improved mental functioning, improved immune functioning, and balancing mood.

Local Practitioner Perspective

Master Wasentha Young is the longtime owner, and an instructor, at the Peaceful Dragon School in Ann Arbor, which has been offering programs and classes in Traditional Chinese Health Arts like Yang Style Short Form Tai Chi, Qi Gong, energy work, self-acupressure, and meditation since 1990.

Young explained that at the creation of both Tai Chi and Qi Gong, there was "no separation between reaching higher potential, spirituality, and artform. Comprehensive Qi Gong covers four schools or frameworks: Martial, Buddhist, Taoist, and Medical."

Tai Chi and Qi Gong Master Wasentha Young

- Martial—bringing energy mass to its highest potential
- Buddhist—bringing mind into the present
- Taoist—connection with nature, movement and experience, and breath work
- Medical—the natural systems such as acupuncture, acupressure, herbology, feng shui—all that affects health and longevity

Young clarified, "Some religions do not count nature while others discuss everything as divine. Qi Gong looks at connections and energetic connections. You study body mechanics, then mind mechanics, and then spirit mechanics."

"If I went to a light switch and turned it on and off—that's Tai Chi. It's a user of the energy processes. Whereas Qi Gong knows why the switch works, where the energy comes from, the function, the interconnectivity.

– Wasentha Young of the Peaceful Dragon School

Regarding the difference between Qi Gong and Tai Chi, Young used this metaphor: "If I went to a light switch and turned it on and off—that's Tai Chi. It's a user of the energy processes. Whereas Qi Gong knows why the switch works, where the energy comes from, the function, the interconnectivity. Qi Gong is more like an engineer if being comprehensive. If just meditating, then one doesn't process all that information. You might be an electrical engineer or the architect, but not able to see the full picture. We need all the specializations. However, medicine includes all these things."

As we talked, the depth and breadth of Qi Gong became clearer. "In studying, you have to take a comprehensive approach to it. Some students expect limited aspects; but that is only part of the elephant." Young's affinity toward the Way came through in gentle waves.

"Qi is more complex than the periodic table. If looking at a body and talking about Qi, there is the muscle Qi (the flow), the mind Qi, and the human spirit Qi. But if practicing as a movement, such as Wild Goose Qi Gong, it adds in the connection of Divine Qi and Nature Qi, and Earth Qi."

Moving Meditations and Comparative Prayer Forms

> **"In studying, you have to take a comprehensive approach to it. Some students expect limited aspects; but that is only part of the elephant."**
> **– Wasentha Young of the Peaceful Dragon School**

"It is not a religious indoctrination and yet if you experience all the different types of Qi then there is a responsibility. You begin to feel the disharmonies. What is your role within that? If you notice something [an imbalance] you have a responsibility to bring yourself back into harmony."

"Wild Goose Qi Gong is a moving practice through ritual of connections." Young explained, "When you finish there is a sense of renewal—a sense of perspective, more spaciousness. There is a core connection and strengthening. It is inward and outward to muscle mass and connections outside of one's self. Spirit is there and higher energy is there but just connected with. Nameless. In terms of Taoism—'the name that can be named is not the eternal name.'"

Master Young has been a practitioner since 1968. She is a founder of the Association of Women Martial Arts Instructors, and has taught at Omega Institute, Institute for Transpersonal Psychology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Rec and Ed, and for several other institutes nationally. In addition to training by Grandmaster William CC Chen and Professor Chengman-Ching disciples, she studied also with Trungpa Rinpoche and Gia-Fu Feng along with earning a master's degree in Transpersonal Studies. For additional joy, she writes poetry and creates mosaic art. To find out more information about classes or seminar possibilities, email Young at wasentha@peacefuldragonschool or call (734) 741-0695.

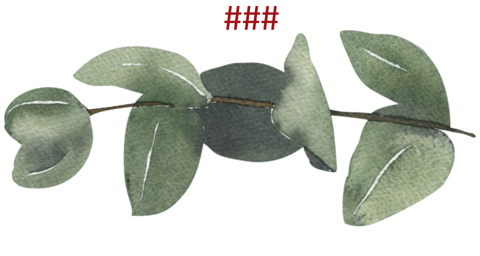
Bringing it Home

Space doesn't permit the additional similarities to Jewish prayer, Catholic mass and Liturgy of the Hours, a Mayan morning meditation, and walking meditations. However, I trust you can imagine now, how body movement has always helped align and commit one to a full presence for deeper, higher peace, and health.

Looking for the benefits of a brief moving flow, but not wanting one based on a specific philosophy or faith? Try my combination of the most common poses with relevant positive affirmations or optional spiritual mantras. Note, any affirmation that is difficult to vocalize, identifies a subconscious area to work on as well as a possible compromised chakra. You'll find this in the sidebar on page 82.

How and where are you brought closest to your Divine connection? For some, it is nature, for others it is within ancient tabernacles carved from stone. And yet the world's foremost religious texts advise simply to go into a closet alone, to a desert, or isolate yourself in order to be free from distraction. Unlike real estate slogans, physical "location, location, location" is not the key to Divine connection. Unity of heart, mind, and body may be the answer you seek. Peace and joy to you on your journey of discovery.

###



Links to Research and Studies

Links to all the research and studies mentioned in this article. More information about moving meditation forms can be found here:

https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/feeling-it/201309/20-scientific-reasons-start-meditating-today

Andrew Newberg: https://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=104310443

Exploring the therapeutic effects of yoga and its ability to increase quality of life: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3193654/

https://www.yogajournal.com/lifestyle/health/womens-health/count-yoga-38-ways-yoga-keeps-fit/

https://yogainternational.com/article/view/sun-salutations-with-mantras

https://www.medindia.net/yoga-lifestyle/surya-namaskar-mantras.htm

http://www.history.com/topics/holidays/ramadan

Physical Benefits of Salah (prayer): https://www.heighpubs.org/jnpr/jnpr-aid1020.php

https://muslimhands.org.uk/latest/2020/07/how-to-perform-salah

http://islamicsufism.com/cn/prayer_mystery.html

https://aboutislam.net/muslim-issues/science-muslim-issues/restore-your-energy-part-4/

Grounding the body: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKVsydPZjz0

https://sufiway.org/about-us/the-origins-of-sufism

https://www.ruhaniat.org/index.php/dances-of-universal-peace-and-walking-concentrations

Demonstration of Sufi Whirling: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkuimX1bh6g

Sufi Music and Wellbeing: https://www.iesrj.com/upload/5.%20MOHAMED%20PRINCE%20M%20-%20Online.pdf

Shah Wali Allah's Arrangment of the Subtle Spiritual Centers: https://ecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1053&context=theology_facpubs

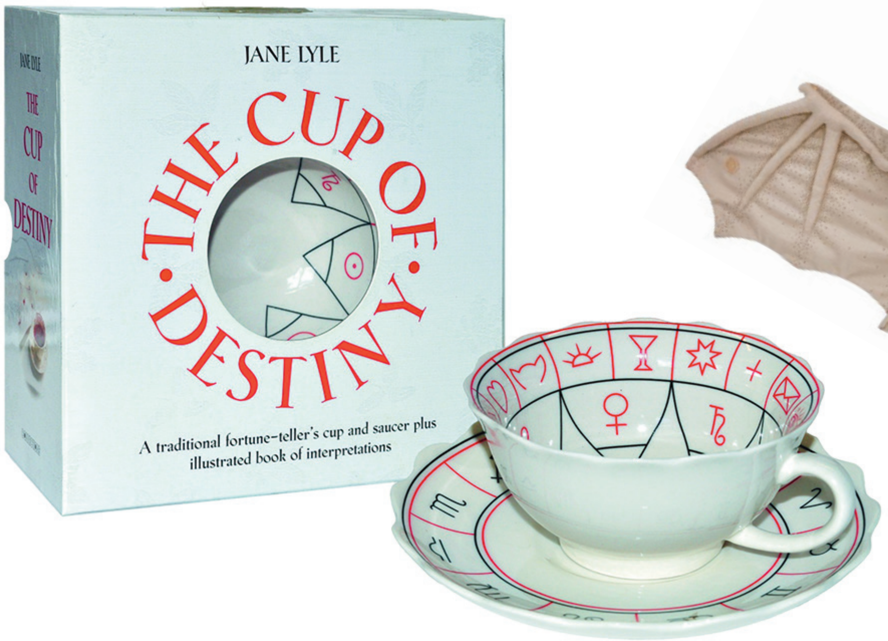
https://www.taoistsanctuary.org/history-of-qigong

https://taichibasics.com/three-dantians/

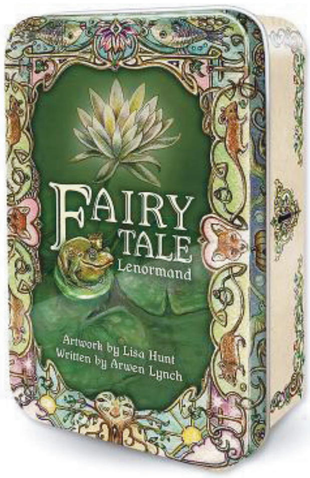
https://theconversation.com/tai-chi-health-benefits-what-the-research-says-130630

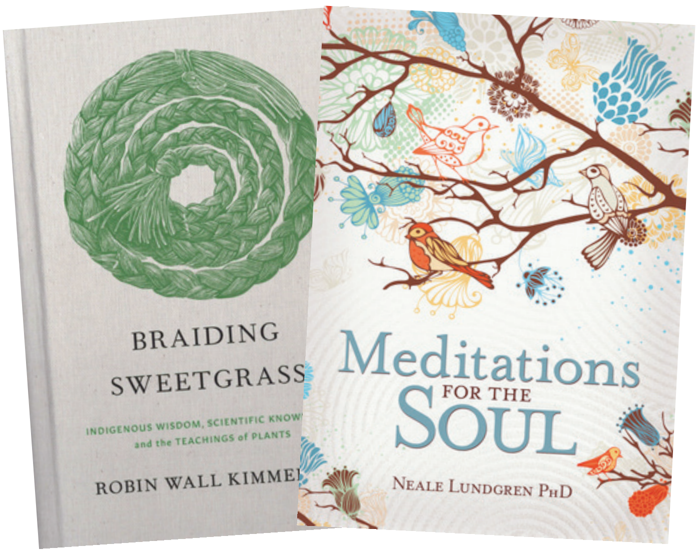
Buy Local
ShopCrazyWisdom.com

Books, tarot, games, toys, blank journals, ebooks, audio books & more


JANE LYLE
THE CUP OF DESTINY
A traditional fortune-teller's cup and saucer plus illustrated book of interpretations

RUNES
UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF THE STONES
A LITTLE GUIDE TO READING RUNES





Children's Book Picks

by Sarah Newland

Where Do Fairies Go When It Snows?
By Liza Gardner Walsh
$8.95
978-1608937226

Everyone knows fairies love spring flowers and summer sun, but what happens when autumn comes and the days get shorter and colder? Now, Liza Gardner Walsh, acclaimed author of the *Fairy House Handbook* and *Fairy Garden Handbook*, explores the matter in a charming children's picture book of rhyming questions. Combined with delightful illustrations by Hazel Mitchell this whimsical book will help children discover just where fairies go when it snows and offer a subtle lesson about the importance of helping one another.

Where Do Fairies Go When It Snows?
Liza Gardner Walsh
Illustrated by Hazel Mitchell

10 Hugs and Kisses
By Nicola Slater
$7.99
978-1452170947

In *10 Hugs and Kisses*, follow all of the adorable characters as they count all the way up to ten by making peace signs, sharing hugs, blowing kisses, and saying goodnight. A board book meant for the littlest counters.

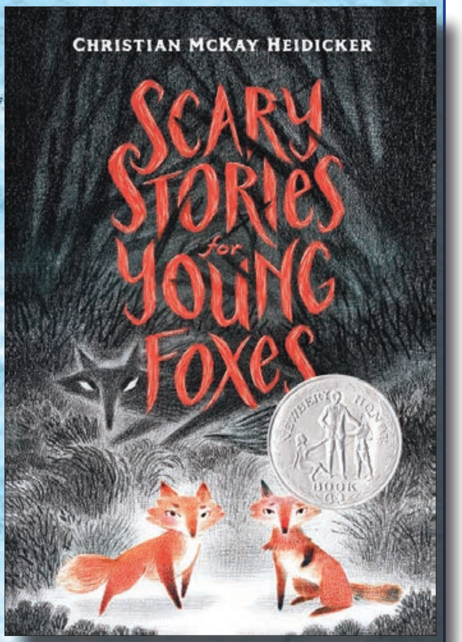
Alice's Farm: A Rabbit's Tale
By Maryrose Wood
$8.99
978-1250791757

When a new family moves into Prune Street Farm, Alice and the other cottontails are cautious. The new owners are from the city; the family and their dog are not at all what the rabbits expect, and soon Alice is making new friends and doing things no rabbit has done before. When she overhears a plan by a developer to run the family off and bulldoze the farm, Alice comes up with a plan, helped by the farmer’s son, and other animals, including a majestic bald eagle. For middle grade readers.

"Alice's Farm is a fantasy, it's real, it's just a joy. And absolutely a book for our times." —Rebecca Stead, Newbery Medalist
Alice's Farm
A Rabbit's Tale
Maryrose Wood

Scary Stories for Young Foxes
By Christian McKay Heidicker
$8.99
978-1250250445

Christian McKay Heidicker, author of the *Thieves of Weirdwood* trilogy, draws inspiration from Bram Stoker, H. P. Lovecraft, and Edgar Allan Poe for his debut middle-grade novel, a thrilling portrait of survival and an unforgettable tale of friendship.

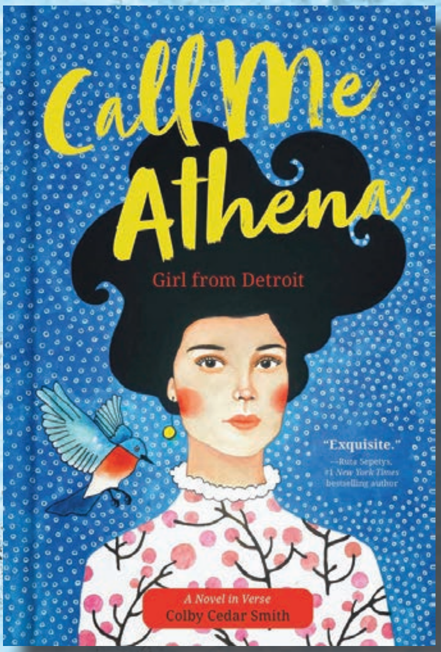


Call Me Athena: Girl from Detroit
By Colby Cedar Smith
$21.99
978-1524865603

This enchanting novel in verse captures one young woman’s struggle for independence, equality, and identity as the daughter of Greek and French immigrants in tumultuous 1930s Detroit.

Call Me Athena: Girl from Detroit is a beautifully written novel in verse loosely based on author Colby Cedar Smith’s paternal grandmother. The story follows Mary as the American-born daughter of Greek and French immigrants living in Detroit in the 1930s, creating a historically accurate portrayal of life as an immigrant during the Great Depression, hunger strikes, and violent riots.

Mary lives in a tiny apartment with her immigrant parents, her brothers, and her twin sister, and she questions why her parents ever came to America. She yearns for true love, to own her own business, and to be an independent, modern American woman—much to the chagrin of her parents, who want her to be a “good Greek girl.”


Call Me Athena
Girl from Detroit
"Exquisite." —Ruta Sepetys, #1 New York Times bestselling author
A Novel in Verse
Colby Cedar Smith

You may purchase these books at shopcrazywisdom.com by either visiting the website or scanning the QR code (right).

The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal • January through April 2022 • Page 87

Conscious Parenting

Supporting Mental Health During Pregnancy

By Melisa Schuster

From the first moment you see the two lines on the pregnancy test, a flood of feelings begins. Maybe it's joy or surprise; maybe it's fear and overwhelm. Whatever feelings arise, there's no doubt about it, pregnancy is an emotional journey. Even if it's a planned pregnancy, it's normal to feel some ambivalence. Becoming a parent is a big undertaking.

> *Whatever feelings arise, there's no doubt about it, pregnancy is an emotional journey.*

A lot of change is about to happen. Pregnant people experience changes in body image, relationships, lifestyle, sense of identity, fears, and anxieties. All of this will influence your emotions, how you feel about yourself, and how you feel about your life.

This is the time many pregnant people focus on making changes to support a healthy pregnancy: they focus on nutrition, gentle exercise, getting enough sleep, taking prenatal vitamins, quitting smoking or the use of alcohol, and attending all prenatal appointments. All of this is important, but what about mental health?

It's as important to focus on your mental health as it is your physical health. Pregnancy is a time of emotional change as well as physical change. An influx of hormones may cause one to feel sensitive and weepy. Who among those in their first trimester of pregnancy hasn't cried at a television commercial? It's normal to have worries as well—about the health of the baby or whether we will be good enough parents, or a myriad of other issues. Some feel guilty at not being able to do everything they were capable of before becoming pregnant.

> *During pregnancy, the first thing you lose is control—over your body and its needs.*

During pregnancy, the first thing you lose is control—over your body and its needs. Maybe you have "morning" sickness 24/7. Maybe you can barely keep your eyes open. Remember, your body is working on creating a human being—of course you're tired and slowing down! Even though you're excited about having a baby, you might also feel irritated, resentful, or downright angry at the loss of control.

Know that this is normal. Having negative feelings doesn't make you a bad mom: it makes you a human being! Be gentle with yourself. Accept all your feelings, both "positive" and "negative." Feelings come and go if we don't deny, suppress, or dismiss them.

Engaging in activities to support our mental health during pregnancy is critical. Studies show that people with untreated anxiety or depression during pregnancy are at greater risk of preterm birth, low birth weight, intrauterine growth restriction, and possibly even preeclampsia.

> *Engaging in activities to support our mental health during pregnancy is critical.*

As with all things, prevention is key. Incorporating mood enhancers like meditation or yoga into your routine has shown to reduce symptoms of depression or anxiety (be sure your yoga instructor has been trained in prenatal yoga as the pregnant body needs modifications to avoid injury). Mild exercise like walking can also improve mood. Talk about your worries and feelings with trusted others or write about your thoughts and feelings in a journal. Find support with other pregnant people in your phase of the journey—childbirth education or prenatal yoga classes are great venues for meeting new moms. Try to avoid other major stressors like moving or starting a new job.

If you find yourself experiencing depression or anxiety symptoms lasting longer than two weeks, then reach out for help. Anxiety or depression symptoms *during* pregnancy are the greatest predictor of Postpartum Depression. Let your doctor or midwife know what you are experiencing. Just like any other condition, early intervention provides the best outcome.

Research shows that both counseling and medications are equally effective in treating depression and anxiety. Counseling can provide support and validation as well as stress reduction techniques and coping strategies. Counselors can help set up a postpartum support plan and help you recognize early postpartum depression symptoms so you can respond quickly. People with a history of childhood abuse or sexual assault or a previous traumatic birth will need support for their unique needs during pregnancy and the vulnerable and intimate birthing experience.

Many people who are pregnant are concerned about taking medications during pregnancy. If the symptoms interfere with sleep or your ability to take good care of yourself, then the risk-benefit ratio changes. Untreated depression also can have effects on the growing fetus. Discuss the risks and benefits of medication during pregnancy with your provider. Do your research, then choose the right course of action for you.

If at any time you experience thoughts of suicide, harming yourself, or running away, please seek out help immediately. Don't keep these thoughts to yourself. Share them with your partner, a parent or friend, and especially your medical provider. You can go to the Psychiatric Emergency Department at your local hospital 24/7 or call at 734-936-5800 or call the Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255.

> *Partners and fathers can also experience stress, depression, and anxiety in the perinatal period but at lower rates than women.*

Partners and fathers can also experience stress, depression, and anxiety in the perinatal period but at lower rates than women. About 10% of men experience depression in the 3–6-month postpartum period, and it is often correlated to their partner's postpartum depression. Dads benefit from good nutrition, sleep, exercise, talking with supportive others, and seeking help from a medical provider or counselor, too. Having a baby is a family affair, and all family members deserve to feel good and to have adequate support and resources to be the best parent they can be. Another good resource for both mothers and fathers is postpartum.net for online support groups, therapist locator, and loss and grief resources.

Melisa Schuster, LMSW, CAADC, is a clinical social worker and certified alcohol and drug counselor in private practice with over 25 years' experience specializing in perinatal mood disorders, traumatic birth, childbearing losses, and parent coaching. Her mission is to help people to remove barriers to creating strong, loving, and healthy family relationships. You can find her at melisaschuster.com or call 734-302-0033.

CW Kids in the Community Winter 2022

Kids Volunteering Opportunities To Give Back To The Community

By Laura K. Cowan

Kids are back to school, but the community is still struggling. Many activities are up in the air even now. One of the ways we can create meaning out of the suffering around us is to volunteer to help others. We all know people or know of people who still have jobs but struggle to afford enough food or utilities. The environment continues to need our help. There are many ways that volunteering can help us help others, which can also support our own mental or physical health.

> One of the ways we can create meaning out of the suffering around us is to volunteer to help others.

Volunteering can provide healthy activity for kids whose routines have been disrupted, while also soothing the agitation of feeling helpless to do anything for others during such complicated times.

There is a lot of need out there, as well as opportunities for volunteering that will fit pretty much anyone. Kids' volunteer activities here include indoor and outdoor options, from helping the homeless to working with animals. In some cases, you don't even have to be in-person to be a volunteer. If you've got a service-minded kidlet, here are some ways you can support them in helping others, sometimes without even leaving the safety of home.

Therapeutic Riding Volunteer

Therapeutic Riding Inc. is a program that helps individuals with disabilities learn to ride horses in order to help them in some way. "It's not equine-facilitated therapy like some other programs," volunteer Program Coordinator Paula Evers told me. "Therapeutic Riding gives adaptive horsemanship riding lessons to impaired individuals. That can include cognitive or physical disabilities," she said. "Participants are received on a case-by-case basis from four-years [old and] up. People receiving the lessons have to be under 185 pounds, because our horses are aging out and that's the limit they can carry."

> Therapeutic Riding gives adaptive horsemanship riding lessons to impaired individuals. That can include cognitive or physical disabilities.
> —volunteer Program Coordinator Paula Evers

The goals? Increase core strength, balance, and cognitive steering to maneuver a horse to the indoor arena. The program helps a wide variety of people but won't work for any individual with uncontrolled seizures or other disabilities that might cause injury during riding.

Paula said the best volunteers to help with this program should be a minimum of 14-years old, because they need to help with side-walking the horses or leading horses with riders on them, and they need to be physically capable of helping with an emergency dismount if that's ever necessary. The job is to assist the rider in completing tasks, and volunteers need to be able to walk in an arena for 30-40 minutes.

The program hasn't tried youth fundraising, but they are open to the possibility. If you have a younger child that wants to volunteer, you can contact Therapeutic Riding to coordinate a remote fundraising drive.

Therapeutic Riding has a backlog of volunteers because Covid-19 has limited their ability to host orientations that are needed for new volunteers, but the team would still love new signups. It's not drop-in, however, and requires a commitment of six sessions of six weeks for each participant. The program runs year-round now in an indoor heated arena.

"Our current facility is gorgeous," Paula told me. "We used to be on Joy Road and all our horses were rented. Now all our horses are owned. We have about 15 equine partners."

For more information about Therapeutic Riding Inc., visit therapeuticridinginc.org.

Help Clean Up The Environment

Want to clean up your own neighborhood or an area of Ann Arbor that needs some ecological support? NAP, or the City of Ann Arbor's Natural Area Preservation program, is an Ann Arbor initiative where you can volunteer with your friends for one of their scheduled cleanup days or create your own.

This could be a really cool way to combine science class or homeschooling, teaching kids how to preserve natural areas and how to identify what's happening in a natural area through a volunteering effort.

Tina Stephens is the City of Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation's volunteer and outreach coordinator. She said that the city hosts "Stewardship Workdays" in local parks. She told me that kids are welcome at all of their events, but here is a list of events that are most kid-friendly: Gallup Park on the Huron River, Botsford Nature Area near Miller Rd., and M-14 on the northwest side, Marshall Nature Area off of Dixboro and Plymouth Road on the northeast side, and MaryBeth Doyle Nature Area near Platt Road on the east side of town.

Workday coordinator Katherine Beauchamp said, "NAP works to protect and restore Ann Arbor's natural areas and foster an environmental ethic among the community. [This includes] plant propagation, seed harvesting, invasive plant removal, and trail maintenance." Group workdays are all open to the public. You can find a calendar of events at a2gov.org/NAP.

"Groups who are interested can set up private workdays," Beauchamp explained. It's a bit more flexible, so we can set a date and time that works best for everyone." It takes a minimum of eight volunteers to plan a private workday, so bring your friends and family. "For minors we need them to be accompanied by an adult," Katherine said. "They can come with a parent or group leader. It depends on the group's needs and who is coming to the event."

Also, "If kids have a natural area in their neighborhood they want to preserve, we can set up a private workday to guide them through how to preserve their natural area." This could be a really cool way to combine science class or homeschooling, teaching kids how to preserve natural areas and how to identify what's happening in a natural area through a volunteering effort.

"Younger kids can't do pole saws, but we can have them collect seeds or pull plants [while] supervised," Katherine explained. "The first thing we direct people to look at is the public workday calendar. That's at http://vhub.at/nap."

NAP is located at 3875 East Huron River Drive in Ann Arbor. For more information about NAP, you can call (734)794-6627, visit a2gov.org/NAP, or join the NAP volunteer opportunities email newsletter at service.govdelivery.com/service/subscribe.html?code=MIANNA_104.

Create Better Futures for Local Kids

Community Action Network is a group of volunteers who offer after-school programs for kids, educational summer programs, and stabilization support services for youth to address social inequity.

Valerie Muthuswami is the Director of Volunteers at CAN. She told us that working with CAN is less in-person volunteering and more about fundraising. Kids can create their own fundraising campaign to support other kids in Washtenaw County, donate funds or school supplies for kids, or organize their own donation drive. "Easy ways for kids to get involved include a donation drive for Thanksgiving or other holidays with their class, team, or neighborhood friends. They can collect food, gifts, holiday gift bags, or other needed items for kids and their families in our communities."

CAN works by a "Theory of Change," in which local partners in under-resourced neighborhoods around Washtenaw County partner with the program to pull together resources and educational programming to offer kids a better future.

CAN works by a "Theory of Change," in which local partners in under-resourced neighborhoods around Washtenaw County partner with the program to pull

HEY MICHIGAN!
NOW IS THE TIME . . .

To own these three award-winning picture books about Mai's special journey to protect the waters of the Great Lakes.

STEPPING Stones
Written by Carol Trembath
Illustrated by David W. Craig
WATER Walkers
Written by Carol Trembath
Illustrated by David W. Craig
RIPPLES & WAVES
Written by Carol Trembath
Illustrated by David W. Craig

Available on Amazon - $14.95 ea
Visit: caroltrembath.com

Leslie SCIENCE & NATURE Center

It's always a wonderful time to be outside! Come Join Us!

See our website for upcoming programs and volunteer opportunities!
www.lesliesnc.org

CW Kids in the Community Winter 2022

together resources and educational programming to offer kids a better future. The idea is to empower people within the community to work together to create better social and educational opportunities for local kids.

This is a great program for kids who want to volunteer remotely or who like organizing donation drives for other kids. Think seasonal or educational goods, or maybe a walkathon with funds raised to support CAN.

You can view the CAN Theory of Change online at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1_0ug1mZLbvXruZOaF7TjDgwTHMPhr2-o/view. Adults can volunteer in person for CAN's programs, but children's volunteering is limited to fundraising support for the program.

To find ways to donate and volunteer with CAN, visit canwashtenaw.org/ways-to-give. Community Action Network can be reached at P.O. Box 130076 Ann Arbor, MI, 48113. You can call (734)994-2985 for more information about programming or email info@canwashtenaw.org.

Serve Breakfast To The Food Insecure

Breakfast at St. Andrews is a program run by St. Andrew's Church on North Division in Ann Arbor. The program serves anyone who is food insecure. About 50% of the program participants are unhoused, and 50% are low-income housing. According to Breakfast Director Morgan Battle, "Seventy-five percent of people do have jobs but don't have enough money to buy food."

The inspiration behind the program came all the way back in the early 80s recession, Battle said. "We thought, what can we do to help people? We decided to start serving a hot breakfast every day, and we never stopped."

The best age range for volunteers? "Age 15-90," Morgan said. "The backbone of our program prior to Covid was retirees, but we strive to have a mix." Morgan explained. St. Andrew's loves the community that comes with all age groups working and eating together.

The inspiration behind the program came all the way back in the early 80s recession, Battle said. "We thought, what can we do to help people? We decided to start serving a hot breakfast every day, and we never stopped."

St. Andrews will take the program indoors for the winter but be back outdoors in the spring to maximize safety for everyone involved. Volunteers must be at least 14 years-old to volunteer and have received two doses of the Covid-19 shot or one of the Johnson & Johnson and have passed their waiting period to be considered fully vaccinated before working with the program. To apply, volunteers aged 14-17 must bring a completed Youth Volunteer Form on the first day they volunteer. For more information about the program, email standrewsbreakfast@gmail.com.

"Due to the pandemic, St. Andrew's Breakfast Program is only able to serve to-go breakfasts that our guests pick-up outside," Battle adds. "This requires only two volunteers. When serving inside, we need five to eight volunteers."

If you can't make it to serve breakfast because of school or safety concerns, there are other ways to volunteer. "We do sometimes have kids and school groups put together care packages," Battle said. "Elementary and middle school students organize drives to put together Ziploc bags with hand sanitizer, a washcloth, travel dental hygiene kits, deodorant, and candy. Everyone loves candy," Morgan said.

St. Andrew's Church is located at 306 North Division Street Ann Arbor, MI. For more information about programs for volunteers, email standrewsbreakfast@gmail.com. You can learn more about this Episcopal church and their mission at standrewsaa.org.

Help House The Homeless

SOS Community Services was founded over 50 years ago by Eastern Michigan University students who saw a need in the community that wasn't being met. It started as a crisis line. Now SOS Community Services is a food pantry and resource center to help people pay utilities. They give bus tokens to those who need transportation, have a diaper pantry, run parenting classes, offer parent and teacher resources, and even help people get into housing through a rapid rehousing service.

"We prefer older youth to volunteer with us. From 13 to 16, we need a parent present, 16 and 17 year-olds need parental permission. We don't have the capability to host younger children," SOS Community Services Volunteer Coordinator Regen Stahl said. "Other programs for 13-15 years- old, adults can come with kids to volunteer with them.

> SOS is expanding their resource center to include social work resources. Older youth can volunteer to answer phone calls, file paperwork, or refer people to resources.

What's it like to volunteer? "On Mondays, we have our Food Gatherers truck arrive, and volunteers help unpack the truck and sort and bag produce. Tuesdays from 9 a.m.-6:30 p.m. we process online orders, and volunteers package them for afternoon curbside pickup. Wednesdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. we do distribution.

SOS is expanding their resource center to include social work resources. Older youth can volunteer to answer phone calls, file paperwork, or refer people to resources.

Stahl said that they're open to expanding the program further, and kids can organize bottle/can return drives or other drives to raise money for the center or host food or diaper drives. SOS also has a Housing Team that is an on-call list of volunteers to help with cleaning and restocking shelter homes when families move in or out.

SOS Community Services is located at 101 South Huron Street in Ypsilanti, MI but serves the greater Ann Arbor area. You can reach them at (734)484-9900 or email Regen Stahl at regens@soscs.org. Find programming information at soscs.org and sign up for their volunteer newsletter.

Tutoring with the Ann Arbor Public Schools

Older kids can find an easy volunteer opportunity in tutoring peers after school at several local schools. They can tutor at Bryant Elementary, Dicken Elementary, or Forsythe Middle School. The Ann Arbor Public Schools is currently facing severe staffing shortages, as well, so you might find unexpected opportunities to volunteer for the school system in ways that weren't previously available. For information and contact info on each school in the district, visit a2schools.org.fo

> Older kids can find an easy volunteer opportunity in tutoring peers after school at several local schools.

At Bryant, kindergarten classroom volunteers help with students aged four to five years-old. According to program coordinators, "Responsibilities would include assisting with writing, reading, and art activities, plus reading stories with individual children and assisting children and the teacher as needed." To volunteer at Bryant, contact the principal Roberta Heyward. This is a better opportunity for adults, but many elementary schools also have ways for kids to get involved in behind-the-scenes support. You might find that if you want to tutor, your kid can participate in some way at the school at the same time. Schools are hurting for everything from bus drivers to teachers to funds for after-school programs right now, so it's a perfect time to ask how you can help out.

At Dicken Elementary, small group tutoring and one-on-one tutoring openings are available for a wider range of ages: K-5 in all subject areas. You must be available to tutor during the main school day from 9:00 am - 3:30 pm or some part of that time.

Forsythe Middle School on Ann Arbor's west side offers one-on-one tutoring for grades 6-8 in all subjects but is primarily focused on math and reading. You can volunteer during school hours or after school, which makes this a convenient opportunity for teenagers at nearby Skyline High School.

The Ann Arbor Public Schools have, like other school districts, made very hard choices in the past two years to keep operations working as well as possible while keeping kids safe during Covid. Because there are more remote programs now available to students who didn't return to in-person learning, you might also inquire about ways to volunteer or tutor that are with the A2 Virtual + Village remote schooling programs. For more information on those programs and for contact information, visit a2schools.org/a2village.

Bryant volunteer tutors should contact Roberta Heyward, Principal, Bryant School, at (734)997-1212 or email heywardr@aaps.k12.mi.us. For tutoring at Forsythe Middle, contact the counselors at Forsythe at 1655 Newport Road, or call (734)994-1985. For Dicken Elementary, call the Principal at Dicken School at (734)994-1928. Dicken Elementary is located at 2135 Runnymeade.

Find The Perfect Volunteering Opportunity

There are so many volunteering programs we couldn't list them all here, and of course programs are changing quickly because of Covid-19. We were told by a number of programs that they've reduced or cut in-person volunteering for children, in particular, for safety reasons this year, so you might find there are more opportunities for adults than children right now. That could quickly change, so keep an eye out if you're looking for chances for your kids to get involved, or for you to work together as a family to give back.

> Non-profits need our help more than ever during these hard times, so if we can find remote ways to support them, or safe ways for kids to volunteer, it's one of the most meaningful times to participate in these valuable community support programs that are critical resources for so many of our neighbors.

Non-profits need our help more than ever during these hard times, so if we can find remote ways to support them, or safe ways for kids to volunteer, it's one of the most meaningful times to participate in these valuable community support programs that are critical resources for so many of our neighbors.

If you're looking for another volunteering opportunity for your child or you not mentioned here, there are some great apps and websites that list local opportunities near you. Try one of the following:

Volunteer Match: volunteermatch.org (The Ecology Network, Clean Water Action, Slow Food Huron Valley)

Ann Arbor Observer Volunteering Section: https://annarborobserver.com/cg/t0120.html#.YW7lCS2cbOQ (Girls on the Run, Project Grow, Jewish Family Services, 826 Michigan and more)

Local Wiki Volunteering Ann Arbor: https://localwiki.org/ann-arbor/Volunteer_opportunities_for_youth_and_teens (Ann Arbor Teens for Kids, Growing Hope)

We Will Get There

I know it feels like forever since this pandemic started, and many children's activities besides restricted sports are a distant memory. But we will get there. I've found that when I'm in my head too much and down about what's going on in the world, getting out and focusing on working with other people toward a positive goal can lift my spirits and get me back on track. I hope one of these activities, or a similar volunteering program, will help you help your kids through what we hope will be the final months of this pandemic.

However the next year shapes up, parents have had it hard on all sides during the last two years, and it can feel like there isn't a lot of support for parents, much less kids, right now. I don't really know what to say other than to acknowledge this, as well as the loss and struggle experienced by so many. But, this won't last forever. Even if it hasn't been the most polished couple of years as we pulled off the impossible from remote schooling to remote working to everything we juggled in between, we are getting through this. I sincerely hope that you find new connections, a renewed sense of community, and hope for yourself and your children.

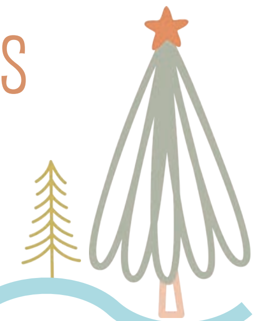
If the past few years have taught us anything, it's that we need each other. I've seen kids helping with volunteering and family chores these last two years, and kids who pulled off heroic levels of achievement just to manage difficult schooling situations. Whatever you can manage right now, it's fine.

It's more than enough.

Laura K. Cowan is the Kids in The Community columnist for Crazy Wisdom Journal and the Healers of Ann Arbor columnist. She is a tech and wellness journalist from Ann Arbor, and also runs Cronicle Press, an Ann Arbor tech blog and content marketing consultancy for tech startups and small businesses. You can learn more at cronicle.press. You can reach Cowan at laurakcowan@gmail.com.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

a Free Guide to Local Classes, Workshops, and Events
September through December 2021



Calendar Edited by Michelle McLemore

A COURSE IN MIRACLES

A Course in Miracles Study Group via Zoom with Rev. David Bell • Weekly Mondays: January 3 – April 25 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Discussion of A Course in Miracles. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

A Course in Miracles Study Group via Zoom with Randall Counts • Weekly Thursdays: January 6 – April 28 • 12 - 1:30 p.m. • Group study of A Course in Miracles. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

ANIMALS AND PETS

Basic Animal Communication with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday-Sunday, February 12 and 13 • 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Class will be held via Zoom. Learn how to communicate telepathically with animals the way they communicate with each other. Open your intuitive reception in a relaxed, supportive teaching environment. Step by step, you will build skills to enable a closer relationship with your animals and have fun doing it! $150 if paid by February 1. $180 after. Contact Judy Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; JudyRamsey.net.

AROMATHERAPY AND ESSENTIAL OILS

Creating Personalized Bath Collection with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, February 27 • 6 - 9 p.m. • Choose from a massive collection of essential oils to create your own personalized bath collection to take home, to awaken, to believe in yourself, to help move you closer toward your life's purpose, for purity, for clarity, to envision, for inspiration, to surrender, for acceptance, for hope, for joy, for gratitude, for humility, for courage, for love, for clearing, for energy, for creativity, and for abundance. Special $75 + $50 Materials Fee (Normal Class Rate = $125 + $50 Materials Fee). Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511 or krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

The Art and Science of Aromatherapy with Renette Dickinson- CHt., CCFT • Saturday and Sunday, March 26 and 27 • 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Students will learn the history of aromatherapy, the categories and chemical components of essential oils, methods of extraction, safety information and considerations, methods of application, dilutions and concentrations, use of oils with special populations, babies and pets, the therapeutic benefits of specific oils, and their use in Massage Therapy. Students will receive an essential oil kit containing six different oils, a carrier oil, empty bottles for blending, labels, and reference charts. Students will also sample a variety of essential oils. $265.00 for 16-hour workshop. Contact Lakewood School of Therapeutic Massage at 810-987-3959 or dnewman@lakewoodschool.edu; lakewoodschool.edu.

ART AND CRAFT

Sculpting with Earth with Deanne Bednar • Friday, January 28 or Saturday, January 29 • 1 - 5 p.m. • Learn how to source, mix, and sculpt with earth/local subsoil. Enjoy making a project to take home. Tour sculptures in the Strawbale Studio. $35. Contact strawbalestudio.org.

Bushcraft: Lashing, Ladders, Quadpods with Deanne Bednar • Friday, February 18 or Saturday, February 19 • 1 - 5 p.m. • Learn Ladder Lashing and how to make projects using Japanese square knot and the A-frame and Quadpod design. Make small models to take home and construct a full-scale ladder on site at Strawbale Studio 1 hour north of Detroit. $35. Contact strawbalestudio.org.

Creating clay sculptures from your soul with Estela Monjo Boudreau • February 18 – 20, or March 4-6, or April 1-3 • 12:00 p.m. • Awaken your creative spirit in a 3-day weekend immersion clay sculpting retreat at Windrise Retreat Center in Metamora, MI. Session starts Friday noon through Sunday afternoon. Perfect session for beginners to advanced artists. $550. Contact Estela Monjo Boudreau at 313-407-0953.

Cording from local, natural fiber with Deanne Bednar • Sunday, February 20 • 1 - 4:30 p.m. • Enjoy learning to make string cord from local natural fibers that we will harvest on the land at Strawbale Studio, 1 hour north of Detroit. Practice the skill and make a project to take home. $30. Contact strawbalestudio.org.

Byzantine Iconography with Aruna/Olga • Saturday and Sundays, February 26 – 27, March 26 – 27 • 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Learn to Paint "write" your own Byzantine Icon: beginners' class. All students will be painting an image of Archangel Michael in the traditional 14th century monastic style with all organic materials. This is a liturgical process, much like "doing meditation." Approx. $400 for the 4 days. This includes gessoed wood board, egg tempera paint, clay and gold leaf, oils to seal icon, instruction with theological meaning, and rent for space. Contact Aruna/Olga at aruna8475bliss@gmail.com.

Spoon Carving Class with Deanne Bednar • Friday and Sunday, March 11, 13 • 1 - 5 p.m. • Enjoy learning a skill to last a lifetime! Basics of safe techniques and tools that we will apply to making a few projects to take home: spoon, spreader knife, and chopsticks. Great for gift-making. $20 - $45. Contact strawbalestudio.org; event details/registration/contact info.

Mandala Painting Workshop with Victoria Schon • Saturday, March 26 • 1 - 5 p.m. • In this 4-hour, hands-on mandala painting workshop, gain a deeper understanding of the meditative and creative qualities painting a mandala can have. We'll work in traditional methods using acrylic paints. Several examples are available. Victoria will be offering guidance and techniques. All materials are supplied, and you will take home an original artwork—a mandala painting to hang at home or give as a gift for someone special. $100. Contact victoria@victoriaschon.com; victoriaschon.com/book-now.

> I pray this winter be gentle and kind-a season of rest from the wheel of the mind.
>
> -John Geddes

BODYWORK AND BODYMIND THERAPIES

Introduction to Cranial-Sacral Therapy with Kathy Paholsky • Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Also known as Craniosacral Therapy, CST is a gentle hands-on technique that uses a light touch to examine membranes and movement of the fluids in and around the central nervous system. Relieving tension in the central nervous system promotes a feeling of well-being by eliminating pain and boosting health and immunity. Students will learn to monitor cranio-sacral rhythms, perform transverse plane releases, and design a session for clients. $265.00 / 16 hours. Contact Lakewood School of Therapeutic Massage 1102 6th Street Port Huron, MI 48060 / 810-987-3959 / lakewoodschool.edu.

D.O.V.E. Divine Original Vibration Embodiment System Practitioner Training with Karen Greenberg • Fridays January 14–January 28 OR February 4–February 25 OR March 4– March 18 OR April 1–April 29 • 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. • After studying D.O.V.E. System manual, learn to identify and repattern client's limiting beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, and patterns, assist client in expressing any commensurate low-vibrational emotions, institute new behaviors, through the Tree of Life. Learn to Kabbalistically balance client's energy via art, movement, music, toning, sound, aromatherapy, gemstones, sacred symbols, connecting with G-D, Archangels, Angels, Masters of Light, trees, powerful Archetypes, and more. $777 (pick any group of three dates above) + materials fee. Contact Karen Greenberg 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Artwork by Jennifer Carson

Our Calendar Editor's Picks of Interesting Happenings in Our Community.

Zoom Ann Arbor/Toledo First Friday Dances of Universal Peace with Judith L Trautman and Elizabeth Rand • Monthly, First Fridays: January 7, February 4, March 4, April 1 • 7 – 8:30 p.m. * See Movement and Dance.

Learn About Self-Hypnosis with Conrad Welsing • Tuesdays, January 11 and 18 • 6 – 8 p.m. * See Hypnosis

Sit. Stop. Write.• Zen and Poetry with Dmitry Berenson • January 23, February 27, March 27, April 24• 1:15 – 2:45 p.m. * See Writing and Poetry.

Shadow Work Through the Chakras with Mara Evenstar Online • Sundays, Feb 6 – April 2; • 6 – 8 p.m. *See Personal Growth.

Create clay sculptures from your soul • 3-day immersion with Estela Monjo Boudreau • March 4 – 6 • 12:00 p.m *See Retreat.

Lightworker Activation with SANDYA – Sandra Shears • Wednesdays • 7 – 9 p.m. *See Spiritual Development

Women and Money—an FWW Conversation with Angela Barbash, Melissa Joy, and Eboney Byrne • Friday, March 4 • 12 – 1 p.m. *See Prosperity and Abundance.

Mushroom Log Inoculation and Earth Oven Pizza with Deanne Bednar • Saturday, April 2 • 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. * See Nutrition and Food Medicine.

Rebirth: Guide to Mind, Karma, and Cosmos in the Buddhist World with Professor Roger Jackson • Saturday, April 9 • 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. * See Buddhism.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks, and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called "Background Information" and which starts on page 108.

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUPS

Jewel Heart Readers with Jewel Heart Instructors • Monthly, Usually Second Monday: January 10, February 14, March 14, April 11 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Enjoy lively discussion on monthly Buddhist-related book selections with our community. Free. Donations welcome. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs.

BREATHWORK

Just Breathe - an FWW Retreat with Dwania Kyles • Saturday, January 15 • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. • Certain breathing techniques can make life better! Learn how proper breathing brings better health. Learn breath techniques for stress reduction, insomnia prevention, emotion control, improved attention, and more! $108. Contact Dr. Suman Tewari at 734-418-2188, fww@a2hg.net, foundations-of-wellness-for-women.mailchimpsites.com.

BUDDHISM

Jewel Heart Sunday Talks: Ancient Wisdom, Modern Times, with Demo Rinpoche with Demo Rinpoche • Weekly Sundays: January 2 to April 24 • 11 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. • Weekly Sunday morning talks (11 a.m. – 12 p.m.) on a variety of topics that are suitable for newcomers and long-timers alike, followed by a facilitated group discussion (12:15 – 1:15 p.m) based on the morning talk. Free. Donations welcome. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs.

JissoJi Zen Ann Arbor Meditation - Half-day Sitting with Rev. Taikodo Marta Dabis • Monthly, Second Sunday: January 9, February 13, March 13, April 10 • 8:15 a.m. - 12:45 p.m. • Join us for several periods of sitting meditation in the lineage of Shrunyu Suzuki of the San Francisco Zen Center, followed by dharma talk at 11:00 am. Free. Donations welcome. Contact jissojizen@gmail.com, 248-202-3102; jissojizen.org.

Practical Buddhism by Gelek Rimpoche with Gelek Rimpoche • Weekly Tuesdays: January 11 - April 26 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • "Practical Buddhism" offers video recordings of earlier teachings by Gelek Rimpoche as an opportunity for some to revisit and as an introduction for others. A panel discussion with Jewel Heart Instructors follows each session. Free. Donations welcome. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

Bridging Sutras and Tantras with Glenn Mullin • Weekly, five Tuesdays January 12 to February 9 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • A hands-on exploration of the Buddhist meditative technology for a balanced practice fulfilling all aspirations of samsara and nirvana: the syncretic approach perfectly unifying the open and the secret teachings of the Buddha. $120 Jewel Heart Members/$150 Non-Members. Pay what you can, no one turned away. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

The Bodhisattva's Way of Life with Demo Rinpoche • Weekly Thursdays from January 13 - April 28 • 7 - 8 p.m. • Shantideva's Bodhisattva's Way of Life was composed in the 8th century and is among the most beloved and inspiring works in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition. With the motivation of unselfishly helping others, a bodhisattva aspires to follow in the footsteps of the Buddha. Shantideva gives detailed instructions on the benefits and methods of living in accordance with the bodhisattva ideals. Members $95 / $120 Non-Members. Pay what you can, no one turned away. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

Melody of Emptiness with Demo Rinpoche • Saturday, January 22 • 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Demo Rinpoche shares his understanding of Melody of Emptiness, Changya Rolpai Dorje's exquisitely composed song that reveals how we can recognize the true nature of reality. Members $60 / $75 Non-Members. Pay what you can, no one turned away. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

ON JANUARY 1, 2022, THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL WILL BE AVAILBLE ON OUR WEBSITE: CRAZYWISDOMJOURNAL.COM.

CAROL KARR

Crazy Wisdom Manager

One day, early April 1996, my mother phoned me and said she had seen an ad in the paper that a store called "crazy something" was looking for a manager and that it sounded like the perfect job for me. That was the beginning of my journey at Crazy Wisdom. Now twenty-six years later, I can say that coming to be part of the Crazy Wisdom Family is one of the best parts of my life. I have made many friends, become close to a lot of co-workers, and have been grateful for Bill and Ruth's guidance and support.

My kids also grew to love the store quickly. My son helping set up storage in the store's basement, my daughters helping for many years do year-end inventory.

My crazy wisdom family helped me through several difficult times in my life, including the death of my son, and for this I am forever grateful.

I have worked in retail for over fifty years, and I can say hands down that Crazy Wisdom customers are the best!

Having worn many hats at Crazy Wisdom—manager, book and sidelines buyer, tech support, webmistress, and design editor of *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal*—it saddens me that the brick-and-mortar store will close in February of 2022. Being 68, I have not been able to work in the store since our Covid closing in March of 2020, but have been working from home. I am grateful that Crazy Wisdom will still have an online presence, and that *The Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* and *The CW Biweekly* ezine will continue on after the store closes, and hope to continue to be a part of the production team that helps it to grow and flourish.

The Mahayana and the Benefits of Great Compassion (Applied Meditation Technology Series) with Hartmut Sagolla and Supa (Greg) Corner • Saturday, February 5 • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Realizing the magnitude of suffering in cyclic existence, practitioners of Mahayana develop the great heart that is willing to work for the benefit of all beings, and for that reason determines to attain the enlightenment of a Buddha. Continuing the Applied Meditation Technology series, these sessions offer methods to expand the spiritual vision to include all living beings and lead the practitioner in practices aimed at full enlightenment. All workshops include instruction, guided meditation, individual meditation, and discussion. $25 Jewel Heart Members / $30 Non-Members. Pay what you can, no one turned away. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

Gelek Rimpoche 5th Anniversary Commemorative Tsoh with Demo Rinpoche • Tuesday, February 15 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Jewel Heart will commemorate the life and work of Kyabje Gelek Rimpoche with Lama Chopa practice and Tsoh on the 5th anniversary of Rimpoche's passing. All are welcome. Free. Donations accepted. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

Equanimity: Living Inclusively (Applied Meditation Technology Series) with Hartmut Sagolla and Supa (Greg) Corner • Saturday, March 5 • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Wishing to help all beings is only possible by first acknowledging our fundamental equality with all, excluding no one and overcoming obsession and hatred in our own hearts. These sessions offer methods to expand the spiritual vision to include all living beings and lead the practitioner in practices aimed at full enlightenment. All workshops include instruction, guided meditation, individual meditation, and discussion. $25 Jewel Heart Members / $30 Non-Members. Pay what you can, no one turned away. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

Interconnectedness and the Kindness of Others (Applied Meditation Technology Series) with Hartmut Sagolla and Supa (Greg) Corner • Saturday, April 2 • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. • All living beings on this planet are deeply interconnected, and our very survival—as well as our happiness and spiritual development—depends on the kindness of others. These sessions offer methods to expand the spiritual vision to include all living beings and lead the practitioner in practices aimed at full enlightenment. All workshops include instruction, guided meditation, individual meditation, and discussion. $25 Jewel Heart Members / $30 Non-Members. Pay what you can, no one turned away. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org.

Rebirth: Guide to Mind, Karma, and Cosmos in the Buddhist World with Professor Roger Jackson • Saturday, April 9 • 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. • Combining lecture, discussion, and guided meditation, this workshop will situate the Buddhist idea of rebirth within world and Asian cultures, analyze the historical Buddha's attitude toward rebirth, describe the realms of rebirth, the causes and conditions of rebirth, and the relation between karma and rebirth. Consider traditional arguments in favor of rebirth and describe and reflect upon the place of rebirth within modern Buddhism. $80 Jewel Heart Members/$100 Non-Members. Pay what you can. No one turned away. Contact jewelheart.org, call 734-994-3387, or email programs@jewelheart.org.

CEREMONIES, CELEBRATIONS, AND RITUALS

New Year Tea Ceremony at Verapose Yoga and Meditation House with Courtney Fitzpatrick • Sunday, January 2 • 2 - 3:30 p.m. • Welcome the New Year with the joyfully simple act of tea drinking. We'll take time to reflect on the past year and will pave the way for the upcoming year while tuning into the ancient wisdom of tea. Join us for a deepening of one's connection to nature, to Self, to the stillness of the mind, and to our authentic community. $40. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com; victoriaschon.com/event-calendar.

Tea Ceremony at Verapose Yoga and Meditation House with Courtney Fitzpatrick • January 15, February 20, April 23 • 4 - 5:15 p.m. • An opportunity to enjoy the joyfully simple act of tea drinking. We leave the complexity of life behind for a while as we tune into the ancient wisdom of tea. Join us for a deepening of one's connection to nature, to Self, to the stillness of the mind, and to our authentic community. $35. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com; victoriaschon.com/event-calendar.

Sacred Cacao Ceremony with Victoria Schon • Sundays, January 16, 30, February 13, 27, March 13, April 3, 24 • 4-5:30 p.m. • Drinking ceremonial cacao is considered spiritual medicine by many indigenous cultures around the world. As we sit together in a small group and consume this sacred beverage, practice mindfulness, participate in guided meditation with intention in a backdrop of sacred sound, our soul is nourished, our hearts open, and we experience greater spaciousness. It is a time for deeper reflection and connection. 3173 Baker Road, Dexter, Michigan. $40. Contact victoriaschon.com/event-calendar.

Ryaku Fusatsu – Full Moon Ceremony with Rev. Taikodo Marta Dabis • Monthly, Final Sundays: January 30, February 27, March 27, April 24 • 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Participate in a traditional Japanese Soto Zen Full Moon Ceremony as practiced at the San Francisco Zen Center, in English. The program starts with 40 minutes of silent meditation and concludes with informal conversation. Free. Donations accepted. Contact jissojizen@gmail.com, 248-202-3102; jissojizen.org.

Full Moon Gathering - Lunar Mid-Winter with Sophia Unfolds • Wednesday, February 16 • 7 - 9 p.m. • We will gather online for this lunar cross-quarter celebration. Visit SophiaUnfolds.org for more information. Donation. Contact sophiaunfolds@gmail.com; SophiaUnfolds.org.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Series

hosted by Edward Morin,
David Jibson, and Lissa Perrin

Second and Fourth Wednesday
of each month, 7-9 p.m.

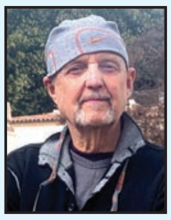
**All sessions are virtual and accessible through Zoom.
Email cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com for Zoom link.**

Second Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.:
Poetry Workshop. All writers welcome to share
and discuss their poetry and short fiction.
Sign-up for new participants begins 6:45 p.m.

Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m.:
Featured Reader(s) for 50 minutes.
Open Mic reading for 1 hour.
All writers welcome to share their own
or other favorite poetry.
Sign-up begins at 6:45 p.m.

Featured readers

January 26 – Mary Minock's new poetry collection, *A Time When You Know a House*, explores the Southwest Detroit neighborhood where she grew up during the 1950s and 1960s and returned to in 1996. She is the author of *The Way-Back Room* (memoir) and *Love in the Upstairs Flat* (poems), and Professor Emerita and former Chair of English at Madonna University.



February 23 – Ron Koertge has had poems twice in *Best American Poetry* and received grants from the NEA and California Arts Council. His novels for Young Adult readers have won two P.E.N. awards. An animated film made from his flash fiction, *Negative Space*, was shortlisted for the 2018 Academy awards. Billy Collins calls his presentations "deliciously smart and entertaining."

March 23 – Margaret Rozga's fifth book of poems is *Holding My Selves Together: New and Selected Poems* (2021). While Wisconsin Poet Laureate in 2019-2020, she co-edited *Through This Door: Wisconsin in Poems* with Angie Trudell Vasquez. Margaret is currently the inaugural artist/scholar at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee at Waukesha Field Station. Website: margaretrozga.com

April 27 – Colby Cedar Smith has poems published in *Pleiades, Mid-American Review,* and *The Iowa Review*. Her debut novel in verse, *Call Me Athena: Girl from Detroit*, is a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection, an American Booksellers Association Indie Next Pick, and a Cybils Award Nominee. She was awarded a New Jersey Council on the Arts Fellowship in Poetry.

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Circle

*The Poetry Series is open to all.
There is never a charge.*
https://cwcircle.poetry.blog/

CEREMONIES, CELEBRATIONS, AND RITUALS CONTINUED

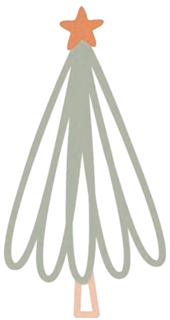
Full Moon Gathering - Lunar Spring Equinox with Sophia Unfolds • Friday, March 18 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Join us for a full moon gathering and Spring Equinox celebration! Location yet TBD, check SophiaUnfolds.org for more information. Donation. Contact sophiaunfolds@gmail.com; sophiaunfolds.org.

Spring Tea Ceremony with Courtney at Verapose Yoga and Meditation House with Courtney Fitzpatrick • March 19 • 4 - 5:15 p.m. • Celebrate Spring with Courtney, owner of Verapose Yoga and Meditation House, for an opportunity to enjoy the joyfully simple act of tea drinking. We leave the complexity of life behind for a while as we tune into the ancient wisdom of tea. Join us for a deepening of one's connection to nature, to Self, to the stillness of the mind, and to our authentic community. $35. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com.

Spring Equinox Ritual Celebration at The Weber Center• Sunday, March 20 • 3:30 p.m. • Hello Spring! There just beyond our seeing eyes, creepy crawly peeks out, robin pokes in the soil, and bear stirs in the den. We humans, at least here in the Northern Hemisphere say good-bye to winter and note that spring is on the wing. We gather to celebrate Mother Earth, to grow our courage and commitment to life for all beings who call this planet Home. If you have a poem, a song, a gift for the sacred space, a funny story, bring it along and come as you are a blessing! For more information contact webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Vernal (Spring) Equinox Celebration with Courtney Fitzpatrick and Victoria Schon • Sunday, March 20 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Join in for the celebration of the Vernal Equinox and welcome Spring! A celebration to honor the re-awakening of our hemisphere, recognizing the orderly intelligence of nature. We'll focus on rebirth after the dark winter, new beginnings, fertility, green, growth and light using the natural world as our guide and honing into the astute observation skills of our ancestors. $65. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com; victoriaschon.com/event-calendar.

> We cannot stop the winter or the summer from coming. We cannot stop the spring or the fall or make them other than they are. They are gifts from the universe that we cannot refuse. But we can choose what we will contribute to life when each arrives.
>
> -Gary Zukhav



CHANNELING

Remembering Wholeness - Darshan with The Mother, channeled by Barbara Brodsky • Monthly Sundays: January 16, February 20, March 20, April 10, May 15, June 12 • 2 - 5 p.m. • A mother is one who gives birth to, supports, and cherishes, and then releases out into the universe, with love, always ready to hold and support. In Remembering Wholeness as we continue, I will be offering from my own understanding the personal and the group messages that can most support the program participants. Suggested donation: $10-$30 individual; $90-$180 winter/spring. Contact om@deepspring.org.

Evenings with Aaron, channeled by Barbara Brodsky • Monthly Tuesdays: January 18, February 15, March 15, April 12, May 17 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Unlike the previous years' Aaron evenings, where I often simply spoke about a timely topic, my focus this year will be weaving the themes of The Eden Project together. All are welcome. You need not be in The Eden Project classes to find value in these talks. Suggested donation - $10-$30 per session; $90-$180 for winter/spring. Contact om@deepspring.org.

CHILDBIRTH

Birth Doula Training and Certification with Patty Brennan • Saturday, February 5 OR April 9 • 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Online professional training from Lifespan Doulas includes self-paced study modules and a workshop with Patty Brennan. Program covers how to provide non-medical comfort and support to the birthing mother and her partner. $697. Contact Patty Brennan at 734-663-1524.

Postpartum Doula Training and Certification with Patty Brennan • Saturday, Feb 19 • 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Online professional training from Lifespan Doulas includes self-paced study modules and a workshop with Patty Brennan. Program covers how to provide non-medical comfort and support to the birthing mother and her partner. $697. Contact Patty Brennan at 734-663-1525.

Postpartum Doula Training and Certification with Patty Brennan • Saturday, April 30 • 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Online professional training from Lifespan Doulas includes self-paced study modules and a workshop with Patty Brennan. Program covers how to provide non-medical comfort and support to the birthing mother and her partner. $697. Contact Patty Brennan at 734-663-1526.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS

Youthful Spirits Class for Young People via Zoom with Heidi Kaminski • Sundays, January 2 - April 24 • 1 - 2 p.m. • Spiritual discovery for young people on Zoom. Free. Donations accepted. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

H2W2 - K4K - Happy, Healthy, Wealthy, Wise - Kabbalah for Kids (5th grade and up) with Karen Greenberg • Sundays, January 16, February 27, March 20, April 24 • 1 - 3 p.m. • Utilizing movement, multi-sensory input, color, and experiential learning, we build self-esteem of spiritually evolved children (rather than reinforcing feelings of being different, damaged, defective, disordered, dysfunctional). In an ascensional journey through the Tree of Life, we aid in organizational skills, navigating low-vibrational emotions, relationships, setting healthy boundaries. We encourage children in discovering and fostering their authentic selves and genius, to fulfill their spiritual mission of a healthy, interdependent, functional planet for the prophecy of "1000 Years of Peace." $50/session. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

DEATH AND DYING EDUCATION

End-of-Life Doula Training with Patty Brennan • Saturday and Sunday, January 22 - 23 or March 5-6 • 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. • Online. End-of-life doula online training covers how to provide comfort and support to the dying person and their loved ones. Topics include: advance care planning, vigil support, legacy projects, home funerals, green burial, caregiver burnout and respite care, bereavement support, and more! Two-day workshop plus self-paced study modules. $697. Contact Patty Brennan at 734-663-1523.

Death Cafe via Zoom with Rev. Annie Kopko • Monthly, First Tuesdays: January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5 • 6:30 - 8 p.m. • Join us for a discussion of death and dying. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

ENERGY AND HEALING

Qigong with Master Wasentha Young • Thursdays, January 13- April 14 • 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. • Feeling like you could use some self-care techniques that will help to give you an energy cleanse and revitalize your sense of well-being? During these sessions you can learn basic qigong stretches, breathing and visualization meditations, and self-acupressure (acu-points used in acupuncture) for just this purpose. $180. Contact Info@peacefuldragonschool.com, 734-741-0695; peacefuldragonschool.com.

Chakra Healing Series with Mariah Alise • Monthly, Third Sundays starting January 16 • 9 - 11 a.m. • The healing and alignment of the seven chakras can provide balance, clarity, and fortitude. You can take all seven classes or select individual classes to attend and focus on specific areas. This experience will include detailed and descriptive exercises, plant-based foods, natural oils and herbs, and other tools that are used daily to help strengthen and fundamentally rebuild each chakra. $275. Contact Mara Evenstar, evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.

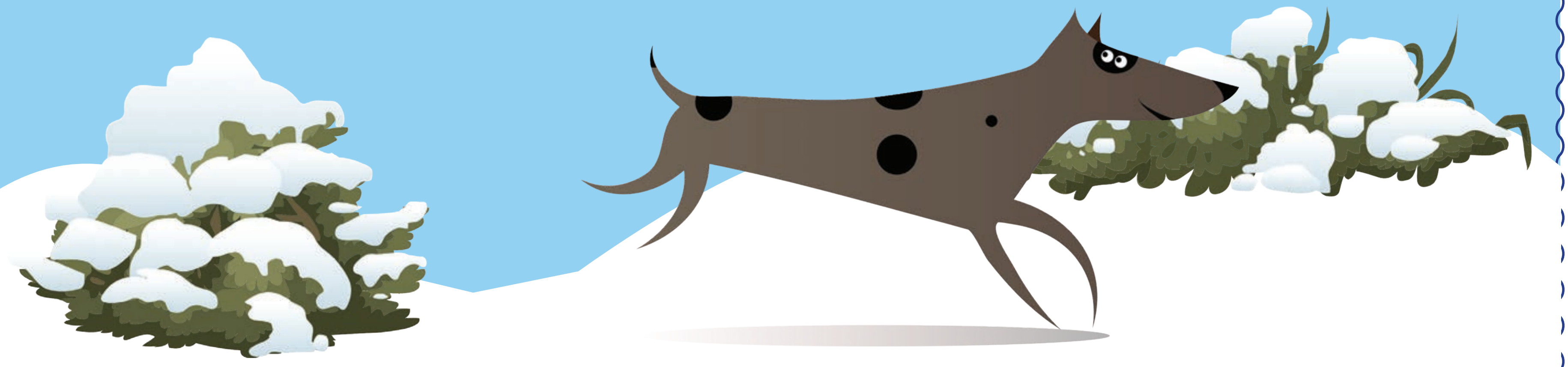
Heightening Your Vibration: Alchemy (2-day class) with Karen Greenberg • Sundays, February 6 and 13 • 1:30 - 6 p.m. • Some people have become depressed with the Covid-19 isolation. Learn a myriad of tools and techniques to change your vibration from a lower to a higher vibration, and to sustain it—including, but not limited to, sacred letters, powerful Archetypes, sacred oils, affirmations, visualization, meditation, prayers that you compose, gratitude, breathing, drumming, movement, music, Holy Geometry, traditions, toning Names of G-D, Archangels, Masters of Light.... $200. Contact Karen Greenberg 734-417-9511 krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

HOLISTIC HEALTH

Acudetox Community Ear Acupuncture with Virginia June • Every Monday, January 3 – April 25 • 5 - 6:30 p.m. • Drop in Acudetox Ear Acupuncture. $20.00 per person. Contact whitewolfhealing.com.

Midweek Wellness Workshops with Liza Baker • Monthly, First Wednesdays: January 5, February 2, March 2, April 6 • 9 - 10 a.m. • Join for a midweek wellness workshop. We'll cover a wide range of holistic health topics, from the best way to eat to how to get better sleep to how to invest your energy rather than trying to manage your time. $20 + processing fees. Contact liza@simply-healthcoaching.com; eventbrite.com/o/simply-health-coaching-352-503-5623.

Talking While Walking



By Fran Adler

My name is Fran Adler, and I've been a licensed therapist in private practice for over two decades. Over the years there have been many aspects of this work that I've greatly enjoyed. But, there is one thing about being a therapist that I've never been crazy about—too much sitting!

The idea of walking instead of sitting while providing therapy is not a new one. I actually started thinking about this concept early on in my career. The truth is, I never stopped thinking about it. Since I've always loved walking, it seemed like a win-win: good for my clients and good for me. On occasion I actually did walk with a client, a young man who preferred to talk while walking and smoking a cigarette! Walking and talking is so natural—it's something we human beings are built to do. Yet, there are advantages for a therapist working in a conventional clinical practice. Agencies often provide new client referrals as well as submit billing to health insurance companies. For clients, there is the familiarity, privacy, and comfort of the therapy office. Still, whenever I mentioned my idea of walk and talk therapy to clients and friends, the response I received was consistently positive.

> There is one thing about being a therapist that I've never been crazy about—too much sitting!

I finally started getting ready to launch Ann Arbor Walk and Talk Therapy in the winter of 2020 when Covid-19 hit. As we soon learned it was safer to be with people outside than inside buildings, and once vaccination became a reality and made it easier to socialize, I decided that 2021 was as good a time as any to meet clients outside the traditional office setting. Also, since more people have been experiencing pandemic-related issues with mental health, it seemed that there was no better time than now.

Walk and Talk Therapy combines two of the best activities for promoting good mental health: walking and talking. More and more studies are revealing what many of us already know intuitively: walking is not only good for your body, but also good for your mind. This simple and natural activity can do wonders to relieve stress, lower anxiety, and improve mood. Walking can help you calm down, give you a greater sense of control, and change your perspective. When problems seem overwhelming, walking can help you think more clearly to come up with new ideas and creative solutions.

If you've never been in therapy, you've probably had the experience of feeling better after talking with a trusted and compassionate family member or friend. One advantage of seeing a therapist is that the therapeutic relationship is apart from your personal life. You don't need to be concerned about things like confidentiality or hurting the other person's feelings. The term, "talking cure," to describe psychotherapy was coined many years ago, and it is still relevant today. Talking about your thoughts and feelings with a nonjudgmental professional in a safe atmosphere of acceptance and support can be enormously helpful.

I first learned the value of therapy, not as a therapist, but as a client myself. In 1988 my young husband, Cliff, was killed by a drunk driver. In the wake of this tragedy, I sought counseling for myself and our two children, ages five and three. The benefits we derived from working with our therapist have stayed with each of us to this day. Our positive experiences influenced my decision to pursue a career as a therapist, and I have been practicing as a therapist since 1998.

> More and more studies are revealing what many of us already know intuitively: walking is not only good for your body, but also good for your mind.

My clients have ranged in age from three to eighty years old, have come from various backgrounds, and have lived in different places, yet all of them were able to improve the quality of their lives. It has truly been a privilege to work with each of them and to witness their personal growth along the way. They benefited from my professional input, and I was enriched by them as well. I bring to my practice the wisdom I've gained from working with all the people who've reached out to me for help, and also, of course, from my own life experiences.

If Ann Arbor Walk and Talk Therapy strikes you as unconventional, it is! But walking and talking can be doubly therapeutic, and may be just the right approach for you.

If walking isn't an option for you, Fran Adler also provides phone and Zoom counseling. Please call her at 734-429-2076 or email a2walktalk@gmail.com to begin a conversation about therapy.

Get the most from your DNA Test with Conrad Welsing • Tuesdays, February 8 and 15 • 6 - 8 p.m. • Explore the popular trend of DNA testing for individuals in an easy to-understand casual presentation. You will explore the options and further work necessary to make your testing results even more worthwhile. Discussion and examples of current offerings are key components of this class. $39. Contact 734-677-5060; wccnet.edu.

GARDENING AND ECOSYSTEMS

Grow Your Own—Organic Vegetable Gardening 101 with Rosina Newton • Thursday, February 17, 12 – 1:30 p.m.; Saturday, February 26 11 am. - 2 p.m.; Sunday March 6, 2 p.m.; Thursday March 17, 7 p.m. • Learn how to grow your own vegetables and herbs successfully using time-honored and modern organic techniques. Learn about site selection, planning, timing, soil preparation, planting, maintenance, and - the best part - harvesting! Now is the time to start planning for delicious homegrown produce. $20. Contact rokanew@gmail.com; newearthhomeandgarden.com.

Yard Transformation: A Beautiful, Climate-Crisis-Reversing Oasis with Rosina Newton • Saturday, February 26, 5 – 6:30 p.m. or Wednesday, April 13, 12-1:30 p.m. or 7 – 8:30 p.m. • Learn about an array of simple techniques, products, and principles that you can use today to heal our planet, one yard at a time. It's possible to enjoy an outdoor landscape that is rich with beauty and interest, while sequestering more Carbon and providing habitat for pollinators, too. $20. Contact rokanew@gmail.com; newearthhomeandgarden.com.

HYPNOSIS

Learn About Self-Hypnosis with Conrad Welsing • Tuesdays, January 11 and 18 • 6 - 8 p.m. • Do you want to understand more about the science behind hypnosis? In this two-session on-line class you will learn techniques to engage the mind, body, and emotions. Come learn and practice self-hypnosis in this workshop. Find the power to change you. $39. Contact connexttext.com.

SARAH NEWLAND

Crazy Wisdom Manager

I started managing Crazy Wisdom in 1993. I was young, and didn't really know much about what we offered, but I knew it was special. There was something about the place when I first walked in at age 19 that made me feel like I was home. Over the years, through births, deaths, divorce, and injury, the store has been my haven–a sanctuary for me, for my children, and my heart. I came back to work after my son was born, nursing him in a sling, and felt so grateful for this place, and the owners (Ruth and Bill) that offered me work over the years from a deeply human place.

Since reopening during Covid, it has been the hardest 18 months of my time at the store, and I couldn't have done it without my supportive and caring (and resilient!) co-workers, masked and serving customers day in and day out. Having Crazy Wisdom close will be a loss from which I'm not sure I'll ever quite recover. I never wanted it to end, and I never thought it would! I grew up here, my daughter grew up here (and works here also), and the way I feel about this actual space—is like family. There have been hard moments, and hundreds of beautiful ones. I don't even really know how to write about it. It's been a true privilege over these 28 years to search for and purchase all the lovely statues, crystals, and sacred things that we hold, to build up our business, and to work in service to the wonderful, caring people in our holistic community. It's been a true pleasure, and a gift.

THE CRAZY WISDOM CALENDAR

INTUITIVE AND PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT

Focused Mind Meditation with John Friedlander • Sundays: Jan 2, Feb 6, Mar 6, April 3 • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. • The development of sustained focused meditation makes it easy to develop a whole new magnitude of psychic skill and healing ability; as well as a whole new level or mental clarity and spiritual openness. $15. Contact Violeta Viviano at 734-476-1513, mvaviviano@gmail.com; pyschicpsychology.org.

Teleconference: Psychic Psychology Women's Group with John Friedlander • Monthly, First Tuesdays: January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5, • 7 - 8 p.m. • For women only, meditations concentrating on women's issues relative to biological energies as well as that of the aura. $125. Contact Violeta Viviano at 734-476-1513, mvaviviano@gmail.com; pyschicpsychology.org.

Exploring Core Techniques and Advanced Material with John Friedlander • Thursday, January 20, 7-9 p.m.; Friday, January 21, 7 – 9 p.m.; and Saturday, January 22, 10 – 12 a.m. and 2 - 4 p.m. • New material introduced with continued development of advanced material and core techniques seeking a natural sense of skills in a practical everyday life. Prerequisite: Level 1 Psychic Development class, CD set, or permission of instructor. Also available as teleconference $275. Contact Gilbert Choudury at gChoud@yahoo.com; psychicpsychology.com.

Spring Intensive 2022 Teleconference with John Friedlander • April date and time TBD • We will delve into newer meditative areas, exploring topics outside of John's core curriculum. Expect powerful healings and growth in skills for every-day use.Pre-requisite: Level 1, CD or instructor's permission. $275. Contact Gilbert Choudury at gChoud@yahoo.com; psychicpsychology.com.

KABBALAH

Brand New Beginning Kabbalah: Kabbalah Miracles with Karen Greenberg • Fridays January 14, February 11, March 11, April 8 • 8:15 - 10:15 a.m. • This life-changing journey is an ordered, systematic approach to develop and balance all the important areas of life. Rather than utilizing so much energy resisting (for example, exercise, meditation, eating and/or drinking healthily), we utilize that liberated energy for creating, which puts us on a similar vibration as our Creator. We become empowered to join with G-D and become co-creative, proactive manifestors of our dreams, desires, and goals, open to miracles, and fulfilling our destinies. Monthly Course Rate - $137/person; Monthly Semi-Private (2 people) Rate - $180/person; Monthly Private (1 person) Rate - $150/hour (based on time utilized) Rates vary. (Evening class also starting Tuesdays.) Contact Karen Greenberg 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS

Kabbalah for Couples with Karen Greenberg • Sundays, January 16, February 27, March 20, April 24, • 3 - 5 p.m. • Have relationship issues been amplified being quarantined at home with your partner? This is for basically good relationships that both parties are willing to work on, to make their relationship even better, physically, emotionally, mentally, financially, spiritually, and energetically. This two-hour session (rather than one hour), one time per month, for about a year, is not couples therapy, but can help you get your relationship to the place that you always wanted it to be but did not know how. $274 for 2-hour session (if one or both have taken Beginning Kabbalah). Contact Karen Greenberg 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Creating Your Ideal Mate with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, January 23 • 1 - 6 p.m. • Identify your Ideal Mate's qualities, learning how to use ceremony, meditation, chanting, movement, fragrances, essences, elixirs, herbs, flowers, colors, shapes, metals, altars with sacred symbols, Archetypal images, and candles. Learn to work to remove blockages, to work through fears and "deserving" issues, and to trust the Divine Order and Timing. $150. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

> BELIEVE IN YOURSELF AND ALL THAT YOU ARE. KNOW THAT THERE IS SOMETHING INSIDE YOU THAT IS GREATER THAN ANY OBSTACLE.
>
> -CHRISTIAN D. LARSON

Intimate Relations—an FWW Conversation with Maria Sylvester, MSW, CPC • Friday, February 4 • 12 - 1 p.m. • Join us for a conversation with Maria Sylvester, who has a special gift for helping women reclaim their sacred feminine power, and embrace their radiant, sensual, sexy spirit and energy. $18. Contact Dr. Suman Tewari, 734-418-2188, fww@a2hg.net; foundations-of-wellness-for-women.mailchimpsites.com.

MEDITATION

White Tara Guided Healing Meditation with Jewel Heart Instructors • Weekly Sundays: January 2 to April 24, 2022. • 9:30 - 10:40 a.m. • Tara is the mother goddess of Tibetan Buddhism, known for her quick and compassionate activity. White Tara is particularly associated with healing and long life. These guided meditations use visualization techniques to overcome physical, mental, and emotional suffering. Free. Donations welcome. Contact 734-994-3387, email programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs.

Chakra meditation and Sunday Services with Lighthouse Center staff • Every Sunday, January 2 – April 24 • 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Meditating 10 minutes on each of 7 chakras and/or a Sunday Service. Free. Contact lighthousecenterinc.org.

Zen Meditation in the SFZC Suzuki Lineage with Rev. Taikodo Marta Dabis • Sundays, January 2, 16, 23, February 6, 20, March 6, 20, April 3, 17 • 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Sitting meditation in the lineage of Shrunyu Suzuki of the San Francisco Zen Center, followed by noon service and informal check-in. Everyone is welcome. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Marta Dabis at jissojizen@gmail.com or 248-202-3102; jissojizen.org.

Silent Meditation Practice with Celeste Zygmont • Weekly, Sunday 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.; Tuesdays 9 – 9:30 a.m. • All levels of meditators are welcome. Held via Zoom. No instruction. Donation. Contact om@deepspring.org; 734.477.5848; deepspring.org.

Meditation Healing and Compassion Meditations with Hartmut Sagolla • Weekly Monday: January 3 - April 25 • 12 - 1 p.m. • Guided meditation on a Buddhist theme followed by discussion. Meditations are centered around healing oneself and others and developing compassion. They include concentrated meditation, visualization, and contemplative meditations. Free. Donations welcome. Contact jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs, 734-994-3387, or email programs@jewelheart.org.

Applying Vipassana in Daily Life and Seeing Its Progression Along the Path with Celeste Zygmont • Monthly, First Mondays: January 3, February 7, March 7, April 4, May 9 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • This class is designed for those who are dedicated to deepening their experience of the Dharma and moving further along the path. Exercises are offered which are informed by Celeste's nearly 30 years of Vipassana study and practice under Aaron and Barbara. Suggested donation: $75-$250. Contact om@deepspring.org, 734-477-5848; deepspring.org.

Putting Out the Nervous System's Fire: Meditations for Coping in Crisis with Amy Hertz • Weekly Fridays: January 7 - April 29 • 4 - 5 p.m. • Settling the mind is tough in the best of times, but when we are hit with circumstances that change our reality, getting access to that part of ourselves that can think clearly and problem solve becomes nearly impossible. Using the breath, writing exercises, and guided meditations, we'll explore ways to calm the body's threat response and regain balance. Free. Donations welcome. Contact 734-994-3387, programs@jewelheart.org; jewelheart.org/free-weekly-virtual-programs.

Movement and Meditation Class Facebook Live with Trevor Chaitanya Eller • Weekly Fridays, starting January 7• 12 – 1 p.m.; or Saturdays, starting January 22 -, 9 - 10 a.m. • Movement and Meditation classes are a mix of gentle yoga and Chinese cultural exercises used as preparation for meditation. Triple Crane Retreat Center uses active exercise practices as a means to prepare for and deepen longer meditation sitting sessions. Donation. Contact Kamakshi at Office@TripleCraneRetreat.org, 734-713-6163; TripleCraneRetreat.org or facebook.com/triplecraneretreat.

Day of Mindfulness with Esther Kennedy, O.P.—Take a Fresh Look • January 8 • 10 a.m. • Come and See, Take a Fresh Look. As we begin this year of 2022, let us continue together on the path of awakening. We come with fresh enthusiasm to embrace the truth of who we are, as best we know our becoming. Our meditation practice can open us to see clearly our bodies, our hearts, our mind and our whole world. We practice to develop a wise and compassionate way to relate to the suffering and beauty of it all; to see for ourselves a deeper truth to life and to grow more free. For more information contact webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

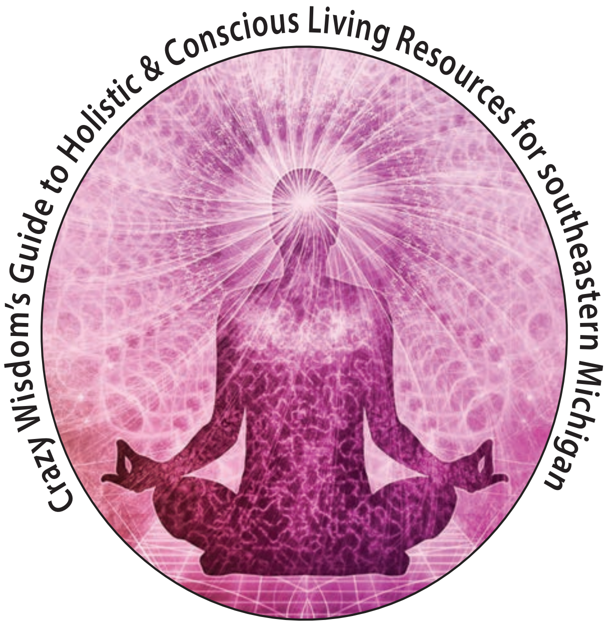
Vipassana and Pure Awareness with John Orr • Wednesdays, January 12, 26, February 9, 23, March 9, 23, April 6, 20, May 11, 25, June 8 • 7 - 9 p.m. • The focus in this class is with deepening of Vipassana (Insight Meditation) and Pure Awareness. This class is for practitioners who already have the basics of Insight meditation and have the ability to be mindful in daily life situations. Suggested donation: $165-$550. Contact om@deepspring.org.

Visit the new, improved, and recently updated

Ann Arbor Holistic Resource Guide

Since 1982, Crazy Wisdom has served as a regional resource for information in the areas of holistic health and integrative medicine, bodymind therapies, psychology and personal growth, Buddhism, spiritual development, and consciousness.

Visit annarborholistic.com if you are searching for a practitioner or business in southeastern Michigan



Crazy Wisdom's Guide to Holistic & Conscious Living Resources for southeastern Michigan

If you are a holistic practitioner or business owner, list your business for free in our online guide.
Questions? Email annarborholistic@crazywisdom.net
Online advertising opportunities available!

www.annarborholistic.com

Full Moon Ceremony

Creating Sacred Space With Others

By Alicia Clark-Teper

What is sacred space and where do we find it? I would describe sacred space as any environment that evokes a serene, reverent feeling of safety and connection. It is a space that allows you to remember the feeling of being exactly who you are with a knowing that you, alone, are enough. It is like receiving a warm hug from a friend or stepping into a bubble that comforts and supports you in every energetic way. Sacred space can be a place—a corner of a room or a park bench, but it can also exist within us in the moment-to-moment connectedness to our own inner wisdom, to our spirituality, to our wholeness. Native American wisdom describes sacred space as the space between the in-breath and out-breath. It exists eternally, within each of us. It just takes slowing down and *listening* instead of *doing* to uncover it.

> Native American wisdom describes sacred space as the space between the in-breath and out-breath. It exists eternally, within each of us.

Sacred space was a concept that eluded my awareness prior to practicing yoga and learning about spirituality. After my first yoga class I was enchanted with how the energy and feeling in the room became a fusion of unity for all of us to come together and create a better version of ourselves in such a loving space. I had been to group fitness classes prior to trying yoga but *this* feeling and energy was not present in those classes. As I kept up my yoga practice, I became more aware of how to cultivate the sacred space that I found so enchanting at the yoga studio for myself. After much learning about the practice of being in the present moment, I began to cultivate and hold sacred space in all that I do. No matter where I was: in the studio, in nature, at a healing expo, and even as I move in the world on a daily basis. Everywhere we go, we can find or create sacred space by cultivating the energy of presence and connection.

The practice of connection and presence has been challenging over the past couple of years. Isolation and separation has become more of the norm, and many of us have suffered because of it. I was lucky enough to have joined an online spiritual community prior to the massive incubation of 2020, which allowed me to preserve the connectivity of gathering with others, even though not in person, in sacred space. I found that developing sacred space digitally was much the same as in-person, it was all about intention setting. As we drew together, as spiritual seekers from all over the world, it gave me a reassuring sense that we are not as isolated as the news would like to portray. As time passed, I found that my sacred rituals became more important to maintain in regularity. It gave me the opportunity to hone my moon rituals and work on clearing, reviving, and rejuvenating my own personal sacred space. I began to realize how important it is for me to find, cultivate, and enrich sacred space not only for me, but also, for and with others.

> Everywhere we go, we can find or create sacred space by cultivating the energy of presence and connection.

This was the beginning of me hosting full moon ceremonies. I wanted to bring people together so that we could infuse ourselves with ancient tradition and modern healing. When the weather started getting nice in the spring, a friend posted that she wanted to have some kind of event using her five acres of land as the backdrop for a night of healing. I was immediately drawn to say "Yes!" to the commitment of regular, full moon ceremonies. Deep in my soul I knew that the heartbeat of the ancestors was calling to be heard again through the ancient ritual of such a ceremony. We would include a bonfire, Reiki flowing freely all night, and create an altar to honor all the energies of the present, past, and future.

And so the full moon ceremony was born. The entire night revolves around the ancient tradition of gathering and paying tribute to the energies of the sky gods, earth gods, and releasing control back to the universe in sacred space. Before each ceremony, I take the time with the land, the energy of the evening moon, and the zodiac sign of the moon to formulate the most sacred healing space that will provide growth for the attendees while asking that the actual land, Mother Gaia, our ancestors, and our future selves join in to support the healing and transformation that only the sacred spiritual energy can provide. When alchemizing the sacred space, I call in the four directions, Archangels, Reiki energy, and the Divine Cosmic Energy to surround and synergize with the present moment and set the stage for unconditional love. Each location, practitioner, modality, and attendee synergize together to co-create the experience while the facilitator divines their own signature blend of sacred energies to aid in the healing transformation and growth that takes place within the space.

For each Full Moon ceremony, we gather to listen to how the current cosmic energies will influence our actions for the upcoming time and then open ourselves to the energies with breath work and grounding. We move into a releasing series of movement or Yin Yoga with Reiki infusion, followed by a guided meditation and ending with a bonfire and releasing ritual where we use paper to burn off into the ethers all that is not in alignment with our highest good and greatest intentions.

> As more and more people begin to awaken to the benefits of gathering in sacred space, I am happy to be able to offer a time and place to gather, commune, and connect.

Many Americans do not understand the paramount need to seek out sacred space so that you can evolve, heal, and know that they are not alone as they work through the layers of who they are, with a healing facilitator and others just like them. As more and more people begin to awaken to the benefits of gathering in sacred space, I am happy to be able to offer a time and place to gather, commune, and connect. I invite you to join our next full moon ceremony to add your beautiful and divine energy to our co-created sacred space on the full moon of each month.

Alicia Clark-Teper is a Holy Fire III Karuna Reiki Master Teacher, certified Tarot Reader, Astrologer, Yin Yoga Instructor, Intuitive, Chakra and Crystal Healer, and certified Moonologer. You can find out more about Clark-Teper, Full Moon Ceremonies, and other services on her website sacredlotusexperience.com.

MEDITATION CONTINUED

Path to the Awakened Heart: The Yoga Sutras of Pantanjali with Robert Jacobs • Thursdays, January 13, 27, February 10, 24, March 24, April 7, 21, May 5, 17 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • This class will explore the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, an ancient text that is a guidebook for walking almost any spiritual, non-dual path. We will consider the Sutras from the point of view of Tantric Yoga, particularly the North Indian school of Kashmir Shaivism. Suggested donation: $150-$450. Contact om@deepspring.org, 734.477.5848; deepspring.org.

Cultivating Mindfulness: An Introduction with Libby Robinson, Ph.D., MSW • Saturday, January 15 • 2 - 4:30 p.m. • In this virtual class, participants will be introduced to the concept of mindfulness, the research on its benefits, and several practices—both meditation and informal mindfulness practices, that we can carry out during daily life. The session concludes with information on options for deepening one's mindfulness practice. Free. Contact Libby Robinson, 734-476-3070, libbyrobinson7@gmail.com; libbyrobinsonmindfulness.com.

Myriad of Meditations (7 classes in the series) with Karen Greenberg • Sundays: January 16, 23, 30, February 6, 13, 27 • 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Meditation is an essential component to spiritual evolution. Learn a myriad of meditation techniques, to discover which resonate for you. Learn meditations with fire, water, air, earth, with the Four Worlds, with different breathing, with Holy Geometry, sacred letters, powerful Archetypes, spiritual beings, qualities of G-D, with movement, music, toning, colors, scents, gemstones, and trees, including several guided meditations through the Tree of Life. $25 per class. Contact 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Reflective Meditation for Worriers via Zoom with Erica Dutton • Tuesdays, January 18 - February 15. • 6 - 7:30 p.m. • This series of classes will teach you a unique combination of mindfulness, insight, and awareness practices called Reflective Meditation. You will learn how to work with your worry through creativity, gentleness, and curiosity. This form of meditation allows for thoughts and uses them for insight into how your mind works. These insights will help you see how habit patterns, like worrying, develop, are maintained, and gradually fade. Patterns such as worrying are complex, often lifelong, and won't disappear overnight, but with gentle awareness, support, and exploration, worry can become less of a problem. $65 - $150. Contact Erica Dutton, 734-417-4385, eld0306@yahoo.com; ericadutton.com. Contact Erica Dutton at 734-417-4385; ericadutton.com.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction via Zoom with Libby Robinson, Ph.D., MSW • January 22 – March 19 • 2 - 4:30 p.m. • Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction is the original mindfulness class developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn in the late 1970s at the University of Masachusetts Medical Center. It has been researched extensively and is associated with reductions in stress, anxiety, pain, depression, substance use, and increases in immune responses, attention, working memory, cognitive flexibility, psychological well-being, relationship satisfaction, and enhanced cognitive functioning. It is an 8-week class, meeting for 2.5 hrs/week, with a 4-hr retreat between classes #6 and #7. $300 (scholarships available). Contact Libby Robinson at 734-476-3070, libbyrobinson7@gmail.com; libbyrobinsonmindfulness.com.

Day of Mindfulness with Esther Kennedy, O.P.—Amp Up Your Happiness • February 12 • 10 a.m. • Amp Up Your Happiness. The 4th Noble truth of the Buddha is the Eightfold Path, not a linear path but one that turns and returns. The Buddha's message of the eight steps to happiness was both simple and profound. He taught us to cultivate skillfulness in our understanding, thinking, speech, action livelihood, effort, mindfulness and concentration. We pause and look more deeply at the 1st three steps. With Skillful Understanding we seek a deeper knowing, with Skillful Thought, we intuitively know our thoughts that cause pain and suffering and those that evoke loving kindness and joy. We practice Skillful Speech and consider our habits and tones of speaking that enhance life and those that diminish life. For more information contact webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Day of Mindfulness with Esther Kennedy, O.P.—Life Orients Itself Toward Happiness • March 12 • 10 a.m. • Life Itself Orients Toward Happiness. We turn again to the Eightfold path and with the next three steps, the Buddha reminds us how our external actions, how our moral choices impact the whole. We practice Skillful Action, not because of rules but because we wish to live moral lives, to do no harm and to abstain from any physical activity that hurts another. With Skillful Livelihood, we choose ethical work and conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity. Skillful Effort calls us to be aware of negative attitudes and states of mind; and to cultivate wholesome thoughts and more friendly and open-hearted behaviors. For more information contact webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Day of Mindfulness with Esther Kennedy, O.P.— If only...I'd be happy! • April 9 • 10 a.m. • If only...I'd be happy! Skillful Mindfulness and Skillful Concentration are the last two steps of the Eight-Fold Path. Each step on the path to happiness invites us to look at ourselves and not get lost in accumulating more and more information. With profound simplicity the full truth of things as they are will be made known to you. A skillful mind is uncluttered, is precise, sees through our negative thought patterns and behavior ad guides us into inner seeing with wisdom and kindness. Skillful concentration is very wholesome, one-pointed, and free of signs of worry, restlessness, boredom, drowsiness, and dullness. When these hindrances arise, you can simply bring forth Skillful Effort to quell them and shorten their visits. For more information contact webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

Raja Yoga Class with Michael Limauro • Tuesday evenings: February 8 - April 12 • 7:30 - 9:30 p.m. • This Raja Yoga class focuses on Patanjali's 8-fold path and is the pathway to Kriya Yoga initiation. It combines teaching, discussion and meditation. $100 for the 10-week course. Contact lighthousecenterinc.org.

Triple Crane Monastery is now

TRIPLE CRANE
RETREAT CENTER

Retreat and workshop space available. Call for details. 734.713.6163

Donations gratefully accepted

ONGOING EVENTS

Join us for
ONE-DAY FASTING AND MEDITATION RETREATS
2nd & 4th Sundays, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
In person or on Zoom
Register on our website

Join us for
MOVEMENT AND MEDITATION
Fridays, 12 p.m. to 1 p.m.
Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.
Facebook Live
facebook.com/triplecraneretreat

SPECIAL EVENTS

YOGA AND MEDITATION RETREAT
February 19 and 20, 2022
For more info and to register visit our website

PURIFICATION AND MEDITATION RETREAT
April 9 and 10, 2022
For more info and to register visit our website

TripleCraneRetreat.org | 7665 Werkner Road, Chelsea MI 48118
Office@TripleCraneRetreat.org | 734.713.6163

MOVEMENT AND DANCE

Zoom Ann Arbor / Toledo First Friday Dances of Universal Peace with Judith L. Trautman and Elizabeth Rand • Monthly, First Fridays: January 7, February 4, March 4, April 1 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Online dance instructions and music for meditation and dancing at home. Donation. Contact jltrautman@sbcglobal.net, sites.google.com/view/a2-toledodup/home.

Sacred Sound Journey with Victoria Schon • January 8, 26, February 12, 23, March 12, 23, April 27 • 6 - 7:15 p.m. • Join Victoria for this deeply restorative sound journey of crystal singing bowls, Tibetan singing bowls, gongs, drumming, and other sacred sound instruments. She begins with guided meditation and relaxation techniques to expand one's ability to find equilibrium and harmony at the cellular level. Experience a deeper meditative state, thus opening a portal of creativity and connection to inner wisdom during and following her sound journey. $40. Contact victoriaschon.com/event-calendar.

Café 704 with Marlena Studer and Steve Ragsdale • Saturday, January 8 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Jazz stylings $10. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

Singing for Comfort via Zoom with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Monthly, Second Thursdays: January 13, February 10, March 10, April 14 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Please join us for music and song. Pay what you can, no one turned away. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

Concert: music, poetry and storytelling with Angelo Pecora and Gus; The Louse Crick Loosely Strung Band • Saturday, January 22 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Music, poetry, and storytelling. $20. Contact lighthousecenterinc.org.

Sound bath Meditation with crystal bowls and music with John Steinbauer • Monthly, 4th Friday: January 28— • 7 - 9 p.m. • Crystal Bowls with music concert meditation. $20. Contact lighthousecenterinc.org.

Intro to Crystal Singing Bowls Workshop with Victoria Schon • Saturday, February 19 • 1 - 5 p.m. • Learn about the extraordinary and beautiful effects of playing crystal singing bowls in this 3-hour workshop. Learn about the fascinating science of sound and how it affects our brain waves, meditation, and our physiology; Learn techniques of playing a crystal singing bowl for your own personal meditation and enjoyment; Learn how to offer sound for others; This is a hands-on workshop; The cost of the workshop includes a 7" crystal bowl personally selected for you to keep. Experience and facilitate a sound bath in a group setting. Tea and snack provided. $300. Contact victoria@victoriaschon.com; victoriaschon.com.

World class classical guitarists with Sean Blackman and John Arnold • Saturday, April 30 • 7 - 9 p.m. • World renown musicians playing heartfelt classical guitar and original compositions. $25 online, $30 at door. Contact lighthousecenterinc.org.

MARY-GREENE MAZUR, is a Certified PSYCH-K® Instructor and a Certified Holistic Registered Nurse who assists people in birthing their True Essence within them to enhance their life experiences. Mazur helped moms have babies for 26 years, first in inner city Detroit, then in a home birth philosophy birth center. These women helped teach her “the power within us when we step into our courage and willingness to achieve what we desire.”

Mazur helps people transform limiting beliefs within the subconscious mind to regain health, heal past trauma, fears, and conditioned programs one embodies. She became a Certified Holistic RN, and then a Certified PSYCH-K® instructor. Mazur offers private one on one sessions and three-day workshops both in person and online to accommodate individual needs. Learn more about Mazur and her practice at igniteandhealyourlife.com.

NUTRITION AND FOOD MEDICINE

Fl!p Your K!tchen® The Kitchen Sessions with Liza Baker, INHC • 44563 Monthly, First Sundays: January 2, February 6, March 6, April 3 • 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. • Curious about what it's like to meal plan and prep for the week? Come into my (virtual) kitchen and follow along! On the first Sunday of every month, we'll spend some time cooking together—on Zoom—and talking about whole foods nutrition and meal planning. Each session can stand alone, or you can take them as a series. $20 + processing fees. Contact liza@simply-healthcoaching.com.

Mushroom Log Inoculation and Earth Oven Pizza with Deanne Bednar • Saturday, April 2 • 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. • Learn about mushroom production and harvesting on this land, inoculate a shiitake log to take home and enjoy a pizza with mushrooms, we will make in the Earth Oven on site! $70. Contact strawbalestudio.org for event registration and contact info.

Weight Loss - an FWW Retreat with Lisa Dahl • Saturday, April 9 • 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. • Join us as Lisa Dahl helps us find food freedom and build mindful practices that support whole-body wellness. Learn to control your cravings so that you can confidently navigate your food and wellness choices. $108. Contact Dr. Suman Tewari, 734-418-2188, fww@a2hg.net; foundations-of-wellness-for-women.mailchimpsites.com.

PEACE

Peace Generator via Zoom with Craig Harvey • February 18, March 18, April 14 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Please join us in creating peace for the planet. Sing, Dance, Chant, set your intentions. Free, but donations accepted. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Mood Lifters Mental Wellness Group with Patricia Deldin, Ph.D, Founder and Peer Leader • 15 Weeks: Tuesdays, January 11 – April 19 • 7 p.m. • Mood Lifters consists of weekly group meetings in which peer leaders teach a series of science-based strategies that improve mood, relationships, and well-being. During the program you will have multiple opportunities to practice, reinforce, and perfect the strategies with the support of both leaders and fellow participants. A second group will be a distinct group that will begin its own separate series of weekly meetings Thursdays 2/10 to 5/19. $200/15-week series, online. Contact info@mood-lifters.com.

The Enneagram and Development via Zoom with Ronda P Diegel • Monthly, Second Wednesdays: January 12, February 9, March 9, April 13 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Explore child and adolescent development through the lens of the Enneagram. Each month a different Enneagram type will be featured. Each meeting includes a brief lecture, meditation, panel interview of the featured Enneagram-type, and a community check-in. Meetings are held on Zoom. $20 per meeting. Contact Ronda Diegel at drrondadiegel@comcast.net, 248-730-0597.

Healthy Boundaries with Karen Greenberg • Sunday, January 30 • 1 - 5:30 p.m. • Learn how to define “Healthy Boundaries” for and with yourself, how to set and enforce them (without caving in), and how to respect others’ boundaries, in all kinds of personal and professional relationships and situations. Role play is a chief learning tool in the work. $77. Contact Karen Greenberg 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Shadow Work Through the Chakras with Mara Evenstar Online • Sundays, Feb 6 - April 2; • 6 - 8 p.m. • In this intimate class of only 6 participants, we will be using a combination of sacred play, witnessing circle, contemplation, reflection, and ritual to bring the shadow aspects of our seven main energy centers into the light for acceptance, integration, and healing. 9-week course $500. Contact Mara Evenstar, evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.

PROSPERITY AND ABUNDANCE

Women and Money - an FWW Conversation with Angela Barbash, Melissa Joy and Eboney Byrne • Friday, March 4 • 12 - 1 p.m. • With years of experience in investment advising, financial advising, financial education, and money coaching, our three experts will bring their best ideas for women to better plan and manage their finances at every phase of their life. $18. Contact Dr. Suman Tewari at 734-418-2188, fww@a2hg.net; foundations-of-wellness-for-women.mailchimpsites.com.

> Blessed are those who can give without remembering and take without forgetting.
>
> -Elizabeth Bibesco

REIKI

Shoden Reiki Level I Certification with Courtney Fitzpatrick • Friday, January 21 - January 23 • Times vary • The word Reiki is made of two Japanese words - Rei which means "God's Wisdom or the Higher Power" and Ki which is "life force energy." Reiki is a Japanese technique for stress reduction and relaxation that also promotes healing. It is administered by "laying on hands" at this first level, and is based on the idea that an unseen "life force energy" flows through us and is what causes us to be alive. It comprises 15 hours of training. $195 early bird until December 20 or $215 after. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com.

Advanced Reiki III Master Class with Alicia Clark-Teper • February 7 and 10th • 10 – 5 p.m. • Honor the commitment of Reiki in your life by taking your Reiki to the next level. Chakra clearing, more symbols, activations, attunements and healing techniques included. Must have proof of Reiki II for 6 months. $333. Contact Alicia Clark-Teper at 734-945-5396, sacredlotusexperience@yahoo.com; SacredLotusExperience.com.

Introduction to Reiki with Amy Pavlov • Saturday and Sunday, April 9th and 10th • 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Reiki is a Japanese energy work modality. Intro to Reiki lets you experience energy, and gain tools to utilize it for your clients as well as your own self-care. Integrating Reiki results in deeper relaxation and a true full body experience. $265.00 for 16 hours. Contact Lakewood School of Therapeutic Massage at 810-987-3959, dnewman@lakewoodschool.edu; lakewoodschool.edu.

First Degree Reiki Training with Suzy Wienckowski • Saturday, April 23, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sunday, April 24 10 a.m.-1 p.m. • Reiki is a gentle, hands-on healing practice that promotes balance and harmony on all levels: Body, Mind, and Spirit. Reiki is easily learned by all and after initiation by a Reiki Master healing energy flows effortlessly through your hands. The First Degree class includes the history of Reiki, hands-on treatment form for yourself and others, and four individual initiations. Certificate awarded. $150. Contact Suzy Wienckowski at 734-476-7958.

RETREAT

1 - Day Long Meditation Retreats with Master Zhong Hai (Winnie) • Monthly, Every Second and Fourth Sunday beginning January 23 • 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. • These 1 Day Long Meditation Retreats will have an alternating schedule of Yoga, Gung Fa Chinese Exercises, Walking, Standing and Sitting Meditation with a Traditional Chinese Ceremony midday. Students are welcome to attend full or half day as well as on Zoom or in person. Suggested Donation $50-$100. Contact Kamakshi at Office@TripleCraneRetreat.org, 734-713-6163; TripleCraneRetreat.org.

Online Mindfulness Meditation and Self Compassion Retreat with Rita Benn, MC4ME • Saturday, February 12 • 8:45 a.m. - 12 p.m. • Experience a guided mindfulness and self-compassion retreat from the comfort of your home through Zoom. Winter is the perfect time for inviting silence and reflection and to shift the focus away from doing and on being. As parents, educators, and health professionals who are continuously giving to others, it is vital that we take time out to restore ourselves and refresh our practice. This morning offers the perfect opportunity to nourish your body, heart and soul. $35. Contact info@mc4me.org, or mc4me.org.

Deep Relaxation and the Higher Teachings of Yoga Retreat with Trevor Chaitanya Eller and Master Zhong Hai (Winnie) • February 19 • 10 a.m. • Join us for the mid-winter relaxation experience. The deeper teachings of Yoga can transform your life. Join for a weekend of Yoga practice focusing on deep relaxation into our Eternal Nature. These weekend retreats will include Gentle Yoga Posture, Meditation, Breathwork, Yoga Nidra, and Walking Meditation guiding us to dwell deeply in the present moment. Meals will be vegetarian and organic, informed by Ayurveda and Yogic diet (gluten free and vegan options will be provided). You can join us in-person or online. The retreat begins on Saturday with the option to join us on Friday night for a deeper experience. $100/$350 with Work Trade options for those in need. Contact Kamakshi at Office@TripleCraneRetreat.org, 734-713-6163; TripleCraneRetreat.org.

Create clay sculptures from your soul. 3-day immersion with Estela Monjo Boudreau • Saturday – Sunday, March 4 - 6 • 12:00 p.m. • Awaken your creative spirit in a 3-day weekend immersion clay sculpting retreat at Windrise Retreat Center in Metamora, MI. Session starts Friday noon through Sunday afternoon. Perfect session for beginners to advanced artists. Cost includes class, lodging, and food. $550. Contact Estela Monjo Boudreau at 313-407-0953.

Cleansing Retreat for Deep Meditation—Chan Preparation with Master Zhone Hai (winnie), Trevor Chaitanya Eller, and Ryan Huang • Saturday, April 9 • 10 a.m. • Chan (Chinese for Zen) Meditation is best approached once the body and mind have been properly cultivated. Triple Crane Retreat Center offers a unique approach to prepare for deep meditation using Full System Yoga, and Traditional Exercises from Chinese Culture in collaboration with Seated and Walking Meditation. Experience deepening the quality of your meditation and prepare for longer retreats offered at Triple Crane. Join us in person or on-line. Retreat includes vegetarian meals (gluten free and vegan options will be provided). Limited overnight accommodations are available. The retreat begins on Saturday with the option to join us on Friday night for a deeper experience. Fee $100-$350 with Work Trade options for those in need. Contact Kamakshi at Office@TripleCraneRetreat.org, 734-713-6163; TripleCraneRetreat.org.

SHAMANISM

Journeying Circle with Judy Liu Ramsey via Zoom • Monthly, First and Third Thursdays: January 6, 20, February 3, 17, March 3, 17 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Spiritual exploration and healing through shamanic journeying. The circle meets to explore a specific topic and to offer healing energy to self, to community, and to the world. Knowledge of shamanic journeying is required. $25 per session or $40 per month. Contact Judy Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; JudyRamsey.net.

Basic Journeying: The Art of Shamanism for Practical and Visionary Purposes in Daily Life with Judy Liu Ramsey via Zoom • Saturday and Sunday, January 8 - 9 OR April 9 – 10 • 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. • The shamanic journey is an easy and powerful tool we can use to access spiritual information. In this class you will meet and begin to develop a relationship with a compassionate spirit or power animal who is coming forward to help you at this time in your life. You will learn techniques to help you develop a self-directed practice of empowerment, allowing you to move safely, intentionally through the world in a balanced way. This class is a prerequisite to ongoing and more advanced shamanic studies. $150. Contact Judy Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; JudyRamsey.net.

Creating a Sacred Protected Space: Shamanic Personal Safety with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday, January 15 • 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. • Learn how to set up your sacred space, reinforcing it so that your shamanic practice provides you with the protection you need. Discover why you need protection when you practice, and how to clean unwanted energy from yourself and the space. Knowledge of shamanic journeying is required. $80 per person. Contact Judy Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; JudyRamsey.net.

Intro to Shamanism: Path of Empowerment and Healing with Kate A. Durda and Stephanie Tighe • Saturday, March 5 • 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Experiential training in the Shamanic Journey, and introduction to Shamanism healing methods and practice. One of the most remarkable methods to enter into the world of the spirit, or 'non-ordinary' reality, to access personal truths, healing, peace, and to enhance creativity and oneness with the world. Class is in Charlotte, MI. $85. Contact Kate Durda at 517-667-0694; spiritweavers.net.

Shamanic Healing for Animals I with Judy Liu Ramsey • 9-week class Tuesdays, March 8 - May 3 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Learn to do remote healing for animals of all species. Explore unique perspectives for animal healing that draw upon core shamanic practices as well as other traditions. Students will develop a toolkit of techniques within a supportive, interactive, and experiential learning framework of instruction from a professional animal communicator who also practices shamanism. Prerequisite: students must know how to journey. Knowledge of animal communication not necessary. The class is taught via Zoom. $360 if paid by February 20/$400 if paid after. Contact Judy Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; JudyRamsey.net.

Medicine For the Earth and Healing With Spiritual Light with Judy Liu Ramsey • March 12 and 13, 26, 27 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. • Explore the depth of your own inner light and its connection with All That Is. Learn how to transform the energy behind toxic thoughts and achieve balance in yourself and harmony in your world. You will connect with nature, spirit allies, and the elements to learn how to transform and heal yourself, your community, and your environment. Suggested reading: Medicine for the Earth: How to Transform Personal and Environmental Toxins by Sandra Ingerman. Journeying skills are not necessary. All levels and traditions are welcome. The class will be taught online via Zoom. $360 if paid by March 1/$400 if paid after. Contact Judy Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; JudyRamsey.net.

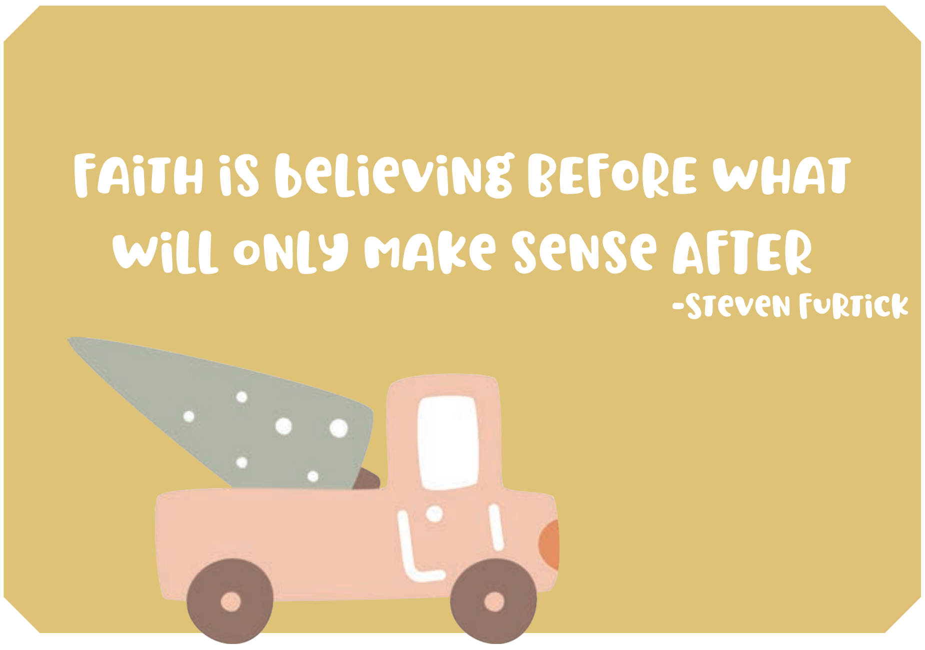
Medicine for the Earth: Personal and Environmental Transformation with Kate A Durda and Stephanie Tighe • Saturday and Sunday, March 19 - 20 • 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Powerful two-day experiential workshop is based on the work of Sandy Ingerman in her book, Medicine for the Earth. Transform personal and environmental pollution by transmuting negative beliefs, attitudes, and the energy that comes forth from our emotions. Work in cooperation with our helping spirits, the spirits of the land, and our own divine nature to create transmutation, culminating in healing ceremony on Sunday afternoon. $125. Contact Kate Durda at 517-667-0694; spiritweavers.net.

Introduction to Journeying with Connie Eiland • March 27 • 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. • This 6 hr class includes power animal retrieval and journey to Upper, Lower, and Middle worlds. Journey is with drums and rattles. $70 until 3/13/22, then $80. Contact Connie Eiland at 248-809-3230, clshebear7@gmail.com; shewolfshaman.com.

Shamanic Drumming Circle with Stephanie Tighe and Kate Durda • March 27, April 24 • 1 - 4 p.m. • The Shamanic Journey Circle offers practicing Shamanic Journey skills. In a Circle, individuals trained in the journey process come together to practice in a structured environment. In this environment one can strengthen their relationships with their Helping Spirits, access Spiritual resources for personal healing, and build community with others who love to journey. Pre-requisite: ability to journey in the method taught by the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, Spiritweavers, etc. Charlotte, MI. $10. Contact Stephanie Tighe at 517-667-8448; spiritweavers.net.

Ancestors: The Power Within with Judy Liu Ramsey • Saturday, April 23 • 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. • We all inherited gifts as well as curses from our ancestors. Learn techniques to access the wisdom and to heal the pain of your ancestral line. Through shamanic journeying, discover the important lessons ingrained in your DNA, and create an altar to honor the ancestors. This class is presented via Zoom. Knowledge of shamanic journeying is required. $80 per person. Contact Judy Ramsey at ramsey.judy003@yahoo.com; JudyRamsey.net.

Cycles of Life with Connie Eiland • Saturday, April 30 • 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. • This class will present pathways to help with your own life explorations. We will work with the Medicine Wheel, the Spirit of the Moon, our Ancestors. This class includes healing, divination, and journeying. Introduction to Journeying is required prior to this class. $180 until April 16, then $220. Contact Connie Eiland at 248-809-3230, clshebear7@gmail.com; shewolfshaman.com.


FAITH IS BELIEVING BEFORE WHAT
WILL ONLY MAKE SENSE AFTER
-STEVEN FURTICK

The Crazy Wisdom Calendar

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Interfaith Sunday Service via Zoom with Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth • Sundays, January January 2 - April 24 • 10:45 a.m. - 12: 15 p.m. • Join us as we explore our spiritual nature and how it connects to all aspects of our human lives. Free. Donations accepted. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

Sufi Class via Zoom with Imam Kamau Ayobbi • Tuesdays, January 11 - April 26 • 6:30 - 8 p.m. • A Sufi class via Zoom. $5-10 per class. Contact 734-327-0270; Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

Lightworker Activation with SANDYA - Sandra Shears • Wednesdays • 7 - 9 p.m. • As a Lightworker or World Server you have incarnated at this time in order to facilitate the transition into the next age. It is time to bring forth the gifts that will accelerate healing and activate spiritual purpose. Includes energy adjustment, activation, and sound attunement. $100 per month prepaid - requires on going commitment. Contact sandya2033@yahoo.com.

Science of Mind Study Group via Zoom with Janet Somalinog and Ray Fix • January 12, 26, February 9, 23, March 9, 23, April 13, 27 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Please join us for a group study of The Science of Mind by Ernest Holmes. Free. Donations welcome. Contact Interfaithspirit.Org/Events.

The 11 Universal Laws with Heather Schram • 44576 • 1 - 3 p.m. • The Spiritual laws help you to understand how the Universe communicates with you, help you to see your struggles and patterns in a clear light, provide you with tangible ways to utilize the laws in real life, enable you to recognize why you are here, in this lifetime, and allow you to have better clarity regarding both external and internal struggles. Receive explanations and ways that you can utilize your knowledge in your day-to-day. $45. Contact Mara Evenstar at evenstar.institute@gmail.com; evenstarschalice.com/courses.

Lightworker Development with SANDYA - Sandra Shears • Mostly Third Fridays beginning January 20 • 7 - 9 p.m. • Group lightwork with current spiritual, astrological, and energy events—includes energy adjustment and activation with sound attunement. $100 per month prepaid, requires an ongoing commitment. Contact sandya2033@yahoo.com; sandya-sandrashears.com.

Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education

Join us for our next Retreat: February 12, 2022

Coming Back to Ourselves

A Half-day Mindfulness Retreat from the comfort of your home. Winter is the perfect time for inviting silence and reflection and to shift our focus on being. When we give ourselves the time and space to breathe, we replenish ourselves. As parents, teachers and professionals who advocate mindfulness practice, it's vital that we nourish our own practice.

OUR MISSION: To cultivate attention, empathy and well-being in students, educators and families by providing training and information on mindfulness practices.

MC4ME | info@mc4me.org | www.mc4me.org

Midrash Study with Karen Greenberg • Monthly Fridays: January 21, February 25, March 18, April 29 • 2:30 - 5:30 p.m. • The written version of the Old Testament (Torah) tells a story—the backstory and various mystical, hidden meanings. It is rich, colorful, detailed, and compiles interesting data like who ascended to Heaven alive, who was so righteous that their deceased bodies never decomposed, the seven things that we are not permitted to know in human form. $180 per month for the monthly study (one three-hour session per month); $180 per month for the bi-monthly study (two 1½-hour sessions per month); $180 per month for the weekly study (approximately four 1-hour sessions per month). Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Connecting with Archangels—Parts 1 - 4 with Karen Greenberg • March 6, 13, 22, April 10 • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. • Become acquainted with the various Archangels represented in the Sephirot (Spheres) in the Tree of Life. Learn who the Archangels are, what they each do, how to create a sacred, protected space, on whom to call for particular assistance, and how to safely call upon them. Connect, ask questions, often receive helpful information. $777 for all four parts. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

> IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH EFFORT TO DO WHAT EVERYONE ELSE IS DOING. A DEAD FISH CAN FLOAT DOWNSTREAM; IT TAKES A LIVE ONE TO SWIM UPSTREAM. IT'S EASY TO BE COMMON. THE PRESSURE COMES WHEN YOU DECIDE TO BE UNCOMMON
>
> -JOEL OSTEEN

Connecting with Various G-D Names/Aspects: Heavenly Travel with Karen Greenberg • Sundays, March 6, 13, 20, April 10 • 5 - 9:30 p.m. • Learn how to create a sacred, protected space to astral travel safely to the planets associated with the Ten Sephirot (Spheres) in the Tree of Life, to become more deeply acquainted with ten different aspects of G-D. Learn how to connect to the energy of each different aspect of G-D, and the special quality that it represents. You may receive invaluable messages and/or answers to compelling questions. $777 for all 4 parts. Contact Karen Greenberg at 734-417-9511, krngrnbg@gmail.com; clair-ascension.com.

Appreciating and Celebrating Jewish Holidays• Tuesdays, March 15, 22, 29 • 1:30 p.m. • This program is offered as an opportunity to reach out and recognize the common roots of the three Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity. The program will introduce the theology, scriptures and rituals of Jewish household observances. The first presentation will provide information and experiences related to Sabbath observances and the lesser Jewish festivals of Hannukah and Purim. The subsequent presentations will provide information and experience of the three Jewish New Year festivals celebrated each fall: Rosh Hoshana, Yom Kippur and Sukkot. The study will conclude with the spring observances of Passover, or Pesach and Shavuot. Cost: In Person-$25; Virtual-$15. For more information visit webercenter.org or email webercenter@adriandominicans.org.

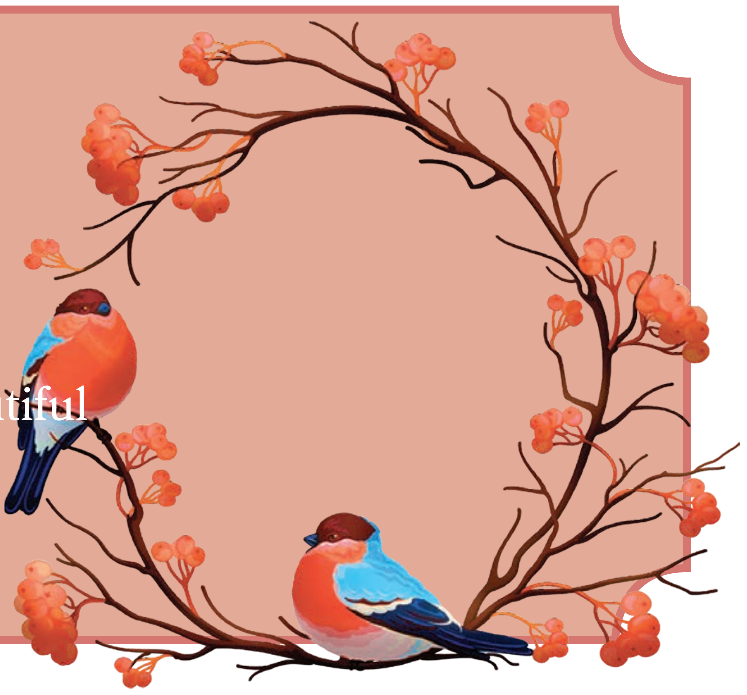
Qigong Meditation Basics 1 ONLINE with Steven Sy • Saturday and Sundays, March 19-20, 26-27 • 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. • Qigong Meditation Basics 1 is a set of meditations designed to release inner tension, increase self-acceptance, open the heart, detoxify negative emotions, balance one's inner energy, and rejuvenate the body. These meditations are combined with soft physical body movements (qigong) to promote health and well-being. No prerequisites. $195. Contact Steven Sy at 517-295-3477, steven@spiritualtao.com; spiritualtaoworkshops.com.

Book Review

the NESTING place:

It Doesn't Have to Be Perfect to Be Beautiful

By Myquillyn Smith



Book Review by Catherine Carlson

It's 2022, a brand-new year! You think: *This is it. This is the year I'm going to decorate my house beautifully. I'm going to complete that home project I've had on my mind. I'm going to make everything exactly how I've been envisioning it*. The season is in your favor after all. It's the dead of winter so you've got time to work on the inside. Yet, in the back of your mind there's that other thought: *Can I really do it? Will I*? Few things are more loaded with potential or expectations than a new year.

According to Myquellin Smith, Author of *The Nesting Place, It Doesn't Have to Be Perfect to Be Beautiful*. You don't have to put in as much sweat, tears, or dollars, as you may think to make your home beautiful, and you certainly don't have to wait until the calendar changes. Smith is a self-taught home decorating expert and coach with an Instagram following and a website featuring an online community, classes, and events. *The Nesting Place* is a guide for anybody who's ever felt their desires were out of proportion to their budget, anyone who is too scared of making an imperfect purchase, or too afraid to begin. It's for anyone who's ever thought their home wasn't good enough because it didn't look like pictures in magazines, books, or on decorating sites.

Protected with trial version of Visual Watermark. Full version doesn't put this mark

> You don't have to put in as much sweat, tears, or dollars, as you may think to make your home beautiful, and you certainly don't have to wait until the calendar changes.

Beginning with the first house she and her husband lived in as a newly married couple, Myquillyn has lived in a total of thirteen homes. Gradually the homes grew to contain the additions of three children and a dog. It was her attempts to create beauty in each dwelling that helped her learn how to do it. She's done it all and made plenty of mistakes—from painting kitchen countertops in a rental property to shocking herself while rewiring a lamp. Along the way she developed impressive creative skills and reframed what constitutes a beautiful home. Her techniques are meant to be applied to a variety of homes because she's lived in all kinds of spaces—apartments, condos, houses and even a garage. A few of these homes were purchased but many were rentals. She is a strong advocate for renting and currently lives in a rented house. Even in the least ideal home, Smith always found a way to make her love the space more.

> It was her attempts to create beauty in each dwelling that helped her learn how to do it. She's done it all and made plenty of mistakes—from painting kitchen countertops in a rental property to shocking herself while rewiring a lamp.

The book addresses all the places we tend to get hung-up when it comes to our homes. Fear may be stopping you from a big project—but can also affect the smaller ones—such as moving a chair or making the dreaded nail hole. Then, there are the other people whose opinions lead you to feel guilty about your idea to paint the table that's sitting in your garage...such as your dad, who says painting over good wood is a sin. And, of course, we all have excuses, whether it's not enough money or becoming deer-in-the-headlamps frozen because we can't make a decision. Making a small change can seem risky, but it could always lead to something better. There is no one right way to do something.

There are some guidelines (not rules!) as to how to begin. One technique is to "quiet a room" which involves removing anything you can carry that isn't a large or fixed item. Once you are only looking at a sofa, window treatments and lamps, for example, you can see your space better and it may reveal a hidden gem you had forgotten about. There are plenty of money saving ideas, too, such as using items found in nature or shopping your home—pretend you are in a store where everything is free, what (that you already have) would you choose?

> Fear may be stopping you from a big project—but can also affect the smaller ones—such as moving a chair or making the dreaded nail hole.

According to Smith, if you are seeking perfection, in your home (or elsewhere), you have two choices. You can either work hard to achieve it, or give up! She has chosen the latter and generously shares her "flaws." Several photos of her home, in the book, have not been tidied up. There's a coffee table covered in books and a laptop hidden among them. She shares a picture that was taken for *Ladies Home Journal* of her office, appearing neat and staged, next to a picture of the same office after the photo shoot was completed. The *after* photo has drawers open, papers all over the desk and looks like someone actually works in that space. Your lived-in home on display for everyone to see is still beautiful. She says, "I don't share it because it's perfect: I share it because I'm finally okay that it's not." She includes an *Imperfectionist Manifesto* at the end of the book.

Finally, here's an enjoyable and realistic book for all the Pinterest-weary among us. One that gives you permission to accept the imperfections of your living space. Instead of being restricting and unachievable, the information in *The Nesting Place*, is forgiving and completely within reach. There is no need to post of a photo of your "doesn't-quite-fit" homemade slipcover along with a shamefully sarcastic "Nailed it!" There's nothing to be disappointed about. Making your home the way you want it *someday* can be *right now* if you are open to the possibility.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

A Course In Mindful Living: Relax, Play, Connect, Grow! with Andrea Weid • Thursdays, January 13, 20, 27, February 3 • 5:30 - 7 p.m. • Relax, Play, Connect and Grow! is a four-week course based on the teachings of Elisha Goldstein, PhD and includes highlights from the ACIML 6-month mindfulness coaching program. We integrate science, wisdom, and reflection into the teachings and exercises. It will focus on relaxing our bodies, minds, and nervous systems, playing more, connecting to ourselves and others with intention, and growing a mindset that fosters embracing change, our selves, and helps transform our lives. We will learn four meditations and share our experiences. $217.00. A few Pay What You Can and scholarship slots available. Contact Andrea Weid at oncesmallchangecoaching@gmail.com; onesmallchangecoaching.com.

TAI CHI, MARTIAL ARTS, AND SELF DEFENSE

Chen Tai Chi Chuan with Joe Walters • Monday and Thursdays 4 p.m., Saturdays beginning January 1, 3 p.m. • Instruction in Chen style tai chi chuan—a unique movement art emphasizing inner stillness and relaxation developed through disciplined whole body integration and refined awareness. Free. Contact annarbortaichi@gmail.com; annarbortaichi.com.

Classes in Wu style Tai Chi Chuan with Sifu Genie Parker • Multiple days and times beginning Wednesday, January 5 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Wu Style Tai Chi Chuan is a soft style martial art emphasizing balance and relaxation. All are welcome to learn this ancient art of meditation in motion. Pricing varies. Contact Deirdre Moore, info@wustyle-annarbor.com; wustyle-annarbor.com.

Beginner Tai Chi with Master Wasentha Young • January 10 - April 14; Mondays, 10 - 11:15 a.m. and/or Thursdays, 6 - 7:15 p.m. • The T'ai Chi form is a series of postures linked together in a continuous, fluid manner. As an internal Chinese martial art, the form focuses on self-cultivation, integrates both physical and mental energy mechanics, promotes relaxation, and builds a sense of presence and awareness. All classes will be "Zoomed" (recordings made available) and optional in-person. Maximum students allowed on-site is 9 plus the instructor. $195. Contact info@peacefuldragonschool.com.

TAROT AND DIVINATION

Introduction to Tarot with Conrad Welsing • March 8, 15 • 6 - 8 p.m. • Explore the history, discover how to use the imagery and symbolism of tarot to discern personal beliefs that can impact our lives in negative or positive ways. We will use the several decks to support insight, with a perspective about one's past, present, and future. $39. Contact wccnet.edu/noncredit or call 734-677-5060.

WRITING AND POETRY

Crazy Wisdom Poetry Series with Edward Morin, David Jibson, and Lissa Perrin • Monthly, Second Wednesdays, beginning January 12 • 7 - 9 p.m. • All writers welcome to share and discuss their poetry and short fiction. Sign-up for new participants begins 6:45 p.m. All sessions are virtual and accessible through Zoom. Free. Contact Edward Morin at 734-668-7523.Email cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com for Zoom link. cwcircle.poetry.blog.

Crazy Wisdom Featured Readers with Mary Minock, Ron Koertge, Margaret Rozga, and Colby Cedar Smith • Monthly, Fourth Wednesdays • 7 - 9 p.m. • Featured Reader(s) for 50 minutes. Open Mic reading for 1 hour. All writers welcome to share their own or other favorite poetry. Sign-up begins at 6:45 p.m. Free. Contact Edward Morin at 734-668-7523 or cwpoetrycircle@gmail.com.

Sit. Stop. Write. –Zen and Poetry with Dmitry Berenson • January 23, February 27, March 27, April 24 • 1:15 - 2:45 p.m. • Like a plant that grows out of bare ground, to express ourselves in poetry we must start from an empty place. We'll do a little meditation and reading from Zen and other sources to help us touch that place and then spring out to write our own poetry. Find your seat; find your voice. Free. Donations welcome. Contact 248-202-3102, jissojizen@gmail.com; jissojizen.org.

Simple Lifelines: Paths Into Stories of the Self with Cindy Guillean • Wednesdays, February 2, 9, 16 • 9 - 11 a.m. or 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. • In this exploratory course, we will use simple lifelines, multi-genre crots, and multi-lifeline visual structures to deepen our awareness of the stories that make up our lived experiences. There will be opportunities to share our processes, insights, and reflections as we discover what stories wish to emerge and how they create sacred meaning in our lives. $120. Contact Mara Evenstar, evenstar.institute@gmail.com, evenstarschalice.com/courses.

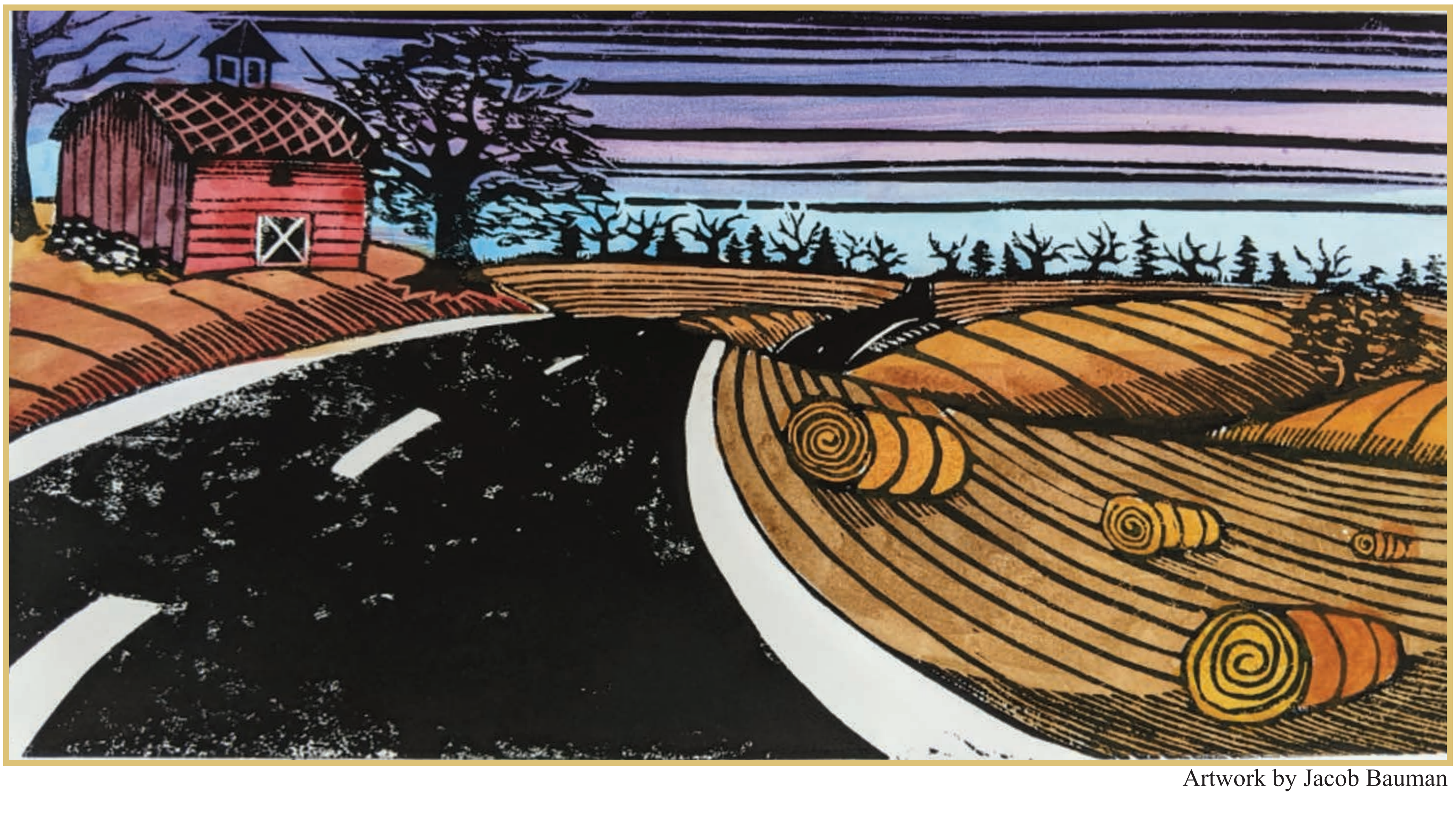
YOGA

Warior's Journey II: Bhuta Shuddi with Abhi Durga Devi and David Shiva Das • Monthly, 1st Sundays (12 sessions) Live and Zoom • 11 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. • A year long journey through purification of the Elements + Chakras. $1700. Contact Abhi Durga Devi at 248-797-0466, LoveDurgaDevi@gmail.com; houseofyogavirtual.com/p/warrior-s-journey-ii-bhuta-shuddi.

Online Morning Practice—Yiquan + Tao Yin Qigong with Steven Sy • Wednesdays: January 5 - March 2 • 7:30 - 9 a.m. • 20 min Yiquan standing meditation + 55 min Tao Yin Qigong (floor stretching exercises). Identical practice weekly for 9 Wednesday mornings with repetition to learn the practice. Short Q/A after each session to deepen understanding of the practice. No prerequisites. $99. Contact Steven Sy at 517-295-3477, steven@spiritualtao.com; spiritualtaoworkshops.com.

Compassionate Yoga with Mary Seibert • Thursdays beginning January 6 • 4:15 - 5:30 p.m. • Remote classes. Kripalu yoga is great for beginners and seasoned students. Classes are gentle and slow paced. Emphasis is on mindfulness, breath, postures, strength, and balance. Sliding scale prices. Contact Mary at 734-323-2520, compassionateyoga@outlook.com; compassionateyoga.info.

Mindful Yoga for Resilience via Zoom with Julie Woodward, MSW RYT-200 • Weekly Thursdays beginning January 6 • 6 - 7:30 p.m. • Weekly yoga classes offer students a focus on gentle movement, breathing, and meditation practices to cultivate greater resilience. Students learn practices to calm anxiety, energize a low mood, soothe isolation, shift habits of body/mind and experience greater compassion for self and others. An adaptation of the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program, this class assists participants in exploring the core foundations of mindfulness through direct experience of yoga practices. Designed to support people

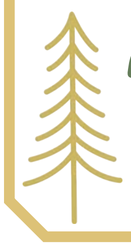


Artwork by Jacob Bauman

in developing the skills to stay centered even in times of turmoil, this class is suitable for beginners and experienced students alike. 8-week sessions repeat seasonally. $104. Contact Julie at jawh@comcast.net.

Iyengar Yoga with David Rosenberg • Mondays beginning January 10 • 6 - 7:30 p.m. • Join us either online or in-person for a class of invigorating yoga postures using the methods of BKS Iyengar to strengthen the body, create a feeling of well-being, reduce stress, and release tension through physical activity and meditation. The instructor emphasizes the use of props and individualized instruction so students of varying experience, age, flexibility, and strength can participate together. 10 class session = $129. Contact 734-646-4195, massage4@aol.com; aarecedonline.com.

Intro to Yoga - A 6 Week Course with Michele Bond • Mondays, January 10- February 14 • 6 - 7:30 p.m. • A fun and effective alignment-based yoga course to release what holds us back, gain strength and flexibility, improve balance and posture, feel happier and less stressed, prevent and heal injuries, and cultivate physical and emotional resilience in the face of life's challenges. $90. Contact Michele Bond at 734-358-8546, michele@yogahouseannarbor.com; yogahouseannarbor.com.



There are far, far better things ahead than any we leave behind

-C. S. Lewis

Open Level Yoga with Michele Bond • Starting January 9 through March, Tuesdays at 6 p.m., Saturdays at 10 a.m., Sundays at 4 p.m. • Each student is encouraged to honor their own unique abilities and limitations in this mixed level class, with variations offered for all levels. Our method blends the science of biomechanics with an openhearted, uplifting philosophy. Learn to look for the good in yourself and others as you enjoy a dynamic practice. $15 if registered for the semester. $20 drop in with instructor's permission. Contact Michele Bond at 734-358-8546, michele@yogahouseannarbor.com; yogahouseannarbor.com.

Yoga for Athletes with Michele Bond • Starting Wednesday January 12 through March • 6 - 7:30 p.m. • Athletes or anyone looking for a strong practice will enjoy increasing core strength, enhancing flexibility, agility, balance, and mental focus with this fun and energetic practice. Universal Alignment Principles help open the door to peak performance in sports and all areas of your life. $15 if registered for the semester. $20 drop in with instructor's permission. Contact Michele Bond 734-358-8546, michele@yogahouseannarbor.com; yogahouseannarbor.com.

Iyengar Yoga with David Rosenberg • Thursdays, starting January 13 - March 24 • 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. - 11:30 p.m. • Join us either online or in-person for a class of invigorating yoga postures using the methods of BKS Iyengar to strengthen the body, create a feeling of well-being, reduce stress, and release tension through physical activity and meditation. The instructor emphasizes the use of props and individualized instruction so students of varying experience, age, flexibility, and strength can participate together. 11 class session = $139. Contact 734-646-4195, massage4@aol.com; aarecedonline.com.

Yoga Essentials with Michele Bond • Thursdays starting January 13 through March • 6 - 7:30 p.m. • For those new to yoga, or new to this system. Learn Universal Principles of Alignment that are an invaluable aid to learning the postures, deepening your understanding of the body, developing a yoga practice that is safe, joyful, therapeutic, and fun! $15 if registered for the semester, or $20 drop in with instructor's permission. Contact Michele Bond 734-358-8546, michele@yogahouseannarbor.com; yogahouseannarbor.com.

If you are interested in obtaining some biographical information about the teachers, lecturers, and workshop leaders whose classes, talks, and events are listed in this Calendar, please look in the section that follows the Calendar, which is called “Background Information” and which starts on page 104.

The Yogic Path - Non-Certifying Yoga Teacher Training with Verapose Yoga • February 4 - 6, March 4 - 6, April 8 - 10, 29 – Mary 1, 20 - 22, June 24 - 26 • 6 - 9 p.m. • The Yogic Path is for students interested in diving into the study of Yoga, or the Science of Self-Realization, for personal growth. While this program is non-certifying, the curriculum and themes are based on our Yoga Alliance Teacher Training approved curriculum. Each Friday evening from 6-9 p.m. is mandatory, otherwise the Saturday and Sunday hours are optional. Our Yogic Path students may choose when they join; our Saturday and Sunday schedule of topics covered will follow the same format each weekend. $1000 Early Bird by Dec 20 or $1250 and/or $1700 with an Unlimited Yoga Membership. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com.

Yoga Teacher Training - RYT200 with Verapose Yoga and Meditation House • February 5 - 6, March 5 - 6, April 9 - 10, 30 – May 1, 21 - 22, June 25 - 26 • 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. • Join us for our Yoga Alliance 200 Hour YTT to empower your connection to your Self, and to learn how to guide others in enjoying the benefits of yoga. You will learn: A balanced approach to teaching, anatomy and physiology, layers of an Asana practice, breath as the foundation, the rich tradition of yoga from its origins. The weekend intensives are mandatory and run approximately 9 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday with an hour lunch break (lunchtimes may vary due to our schedule), along with a few brief breaks. $3,200 paid in full before Jan 1. After January 1, tuition is $3,400. A payment plan is available. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com.

Valentine's Day Couples Yoga with Courtney L. Fitzpatrick • Friday, February 11 • 7 - 8:30 p.m. • Join us for a lovely way to celebrate love! Bring a friend, a loved one, a partner or someone you enjoy being with, for an evening of fun partner yoga. We'll have ample time to get warmed up and have fun together in this light-hearted, unique way to practice yoga! All experience levels are welcome. $65 for a couple. Contact courtney@veraposeyoga.com.

Virtual and In-Person Yoga Classes at The Yoga Room with Christy DeBurton, RYT • Ongoing • In-person and virtual yoga and wellness courses: Hatha, Vinyasa, Yin, Yoga for HSPs, Aqua Yoga and more. Contact info@christydeburton.com; yogaroomannarbor.com.

FIRSTBITE
POSITIVE FOOD • POSITIVE LIFE
108 S Main Street Ann Arbor, MI

Cold Drinks | Breakfast | Lunch & Dinner
Sides | Coffee & Tea | Pastries

We also serve lots of vegan & gluten-free options

TO PLACE YOUR ORDER
734 369 4765 | firstbitefoods.com

Best of Detroit 2021 Winner
for Best Breakfast & Brunch in Washtenaw County

No. 1 among 25 best restaurants for takeout in Ann Arbor
according to Yelp survey in 2020

Follow us on @firstbitemichigan

Artwork by Logynn Hailley

TEACHERS, LECTURERS, WORKSHOP LEADERS, AND THE CENTERS

Aaron is a discarnate entity channeled through Barbara Brodsky, founder and guiding teacher of Deep Spring Center Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry. He offers wisdom and teaches us that we are all beings of light.

Aruna/Olga has been “writing” and teaching Byzantine iconography for over 30 years. The icon is regarded as the sacred “window into the Divine.” There is theological significance in each step of the liturgical process, integrating and assimilating several levels of Light.

Imam Kamau Ayubbi received his religious and spiritual training under the Islamic Supreme Council of America.

Liza Baker, INHC is an Integrative Nutrition® health coach and nonprofit consultant. She received her health coach certification from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition® and an AAS in Culinary Arts from the Cooking + Hospitality Institute of Chicago.

Deanne Bednar: Natural Building and Art Teacher, illustrator of three natural building books. Strawbale Studio, Oxford Michigan, Coordinator, teacher. Loves to forage and connect people with nature.

David Bell is the senior minister at The Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth.

Rita Benn, PhD is a long-term practitioner of meditation and has been leading retreats and classes in mindfulness-based compassion practice for over 20 years. She is adjunct faculty at the University of Michigan in Integrative Medicine and co-founded the Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education and other mindfulness organizations in Ann Arbor.

Sean Blackman and John Arnold have been touring for a few decades. Locally they have played at the Detroit Opera House and have appeared on several local TV stations.

Michele Bond brings an entire lifetime devoted to fitness and wellness and a healthy dose of humor to her teaching. Michele has an extensive background in martial arts, dance, competitive synchronized swimming, gymnastics, stunt fighting, and swordplay, as well as over 800 hours of training in yoga, yoga therapeutics, and meditation.

Dmitry Berenson has been writing poetry for twenty years, and his work has appeared in *The Worcester Review, Poet Lore, MiPOesias*, as well as several anthologies. He has also practiced meditation in the Zen and Vipassana traditions, including daily practice and several intensive retreats. His teaching explores the intersection of meditation practice and poetic creative expression.

Patty Brennan has supported families in transition for the past 40 years as a doula, midwife, educator, and nonprofit doula program executive. She is the author of The Doula

Business Guide and has trained over 2,000 people to become doulas.

Barbara Brodsky is the founder and guiding teacher for Deep Spring Center for Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry and a channel for Aaron. Rooted in the Buddhist and Quaker traditions her teaching reflects this balance.

Alicia Clark-Teper, has been an active Reiki practitioner since 2017. She started her journey in Las Vegas and now is in Michigan to help spread the word of the light as a Holy Fire III Karuna Reiki Master Teacher.

Supa (Greg) Corner has been practicing Buddhism since 1979. He was ordained in the Chogye order of Korean Zen Buddhism with seven years of formal practice. In 1987, he began studying Tibetan Buddhism with the late master Kyabje Gelek Rimpoche and is currently a Jewel Heart instructor, community chaplain, and Director of Jewel Heart's West Michigan chapter.

Randall Counts has been a Course in Miracle student for many years.

Reverend Taikodo Marta Dabis is a board-certified hospital chaplain and ordained Zen priest in the San Francisco Zen Center Suzuki/Katagiri lineage.

Lisa Dahl, a Certified Intuitive Eating and Body Image Health Coach, has learned from personal experience how to "ditch the diet" and has helped countless people get their health and wellness back on track.

Christy DeBurton is a Registered Yoga Teacher and Wellness Educator with 20+ years of experience. She is the founder of The Yoga Room, where she offers a holistic approach to yoga practice by teaching wellness-themed courses with alignment-enhanced instruction.

Deep Spring Center focuses on how we can live with more wisdom and compassion, with loving kindness and non-harm to all beings. Our primary work includes meditation and spiritual inquiry. Spiritual inquiry entails questions related to our deepest purposes here on earth.

Patricia Deldin, Founder, Ph.D, is a Professor at U—M in the Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry. Dr. Deldin created Mood Lifters as a way to help the many people who aren't receiving sufficient mental health care. Her intention is to provide people in pain, wherever they are and whatever their means, with broad access to effective, evidence-based, mental health treatment.

Abhi Durga Devi and David Shiva Das founders of House of Yoga, are seasoned teachers and practitioners of Hatha, Tantra, Mantra and Bhakti Yoga. Bhakti Lineage: Neem Karoli Baba; Hatha Lineage: T. Krishnamacharya

Renette Dickinson is a certified Hypnotherapist and Mental Training Coach and a Certified Canine Fitness Trainer. She has been working with essential oils personally and professionally since 2001. Her training comes from certification through Healing Touch Spiritual Ministries and Healing Touch for Animals.

Ronda P Diegel is a Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist, Yoga (E-RYT-500)/meditation teacher, and co-founder of the Michigan Enneagram Center. She has been teaching the Enneagram for over 20 years.

Kate Durda, M.A., and Stephanie Tighe, MSW, are shamanic healing practitioners and teachers who present workshops on Shamanism in the United States and internationally. Practiced in many forms of cultural shamanism and predominantly Core Shamanic practitioners, they have had an active practice for almost 30 years. They are co-founders of Spirit Weavers, an organization dedicated to providing experiential training in shamanism and offering shamanic healing.

Erica Dutton started meditating to cope with a chronic illness that prevented her from working for the first time in her life. She has been teaching meditation for over 12 years and provides instruction individually or in groups as well as consultation on Reflective Meditation.

When fear knocks on your door, send faith to answer. Fear is a feeling that has only the power we give it. You can feel fear and still do anything you know you need to do, even if you do it afraid.
-Joyce Meyer

Be patient with yourself. Self-growth is tender; it's holy ground. There's no greater investment.
-Stephen Covey

Connie Eiland has been a shamanic practitioner since 2000. She has been teaching since 2013. She has studied with Sandra Ingerman, Ana Larramendi, Herb Stevenson, Carol Proudfoot-Edgar, and others. She has just retired from 50 years as a physical therapist.

Trevor Chaitanya Eller has been teaching Yoga for over 20 years and is the lead teacher trainer at Schoolcraft Community College and Triple Crane. His ability to work with diverse populations comes as part of his Certification as a Yoga Therapist with the International Association of Yoga Therapists (C-IAYT), as an Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher with Yoga Alliance (E-RYT), and from his training as an Ayurvedic Life-Style Consultant, with the American Institute of Vedic Studies. Trevor is also a Stress Management Yoga Consultant through Integral Yoga. He teaches online classes through Integral Yoga San Fransisco.

Mara Evenstar, MTP, M.Ed., is co-owner of Evenstar's Chalice and Director of Evenstar Institute. She is a spiritual and transpersonal psychologist, educator, energy healer, and ritual priestess.

Evenstar Institute provides courses to evolve and enrich your life.

Courtney Fitzpatrick, E-RYT 500, MA, Reiki Master, Birth/Postpartum Doula and is the owner and lead teacher at Verapose Yoga and Meditation House. Courtney has her Master's Degree in Arts Administration, RYT-200, RYT-500, Reiki I and II and Reiki III Master Level, Birth and Postpartum Doula, and is the owner of Verapose Yoga Studio in Dexter, MI since 2015. She purchased the Yoga House in 2017 and created the Verapose Wellness Cooperative in 2019.

Ray Fix is a long-time student of The Science of Mind.

John Friedlander is an internationally acclaimed psychic, author, and teacher with degrees from Duke University and Harvard Law School. He has studied with Jane Roberts in her Seth class and at the Berkeley Psychic Institute with founder Lewis Bostwick.

Sifu Genie has trained and taught Wu Style Tai Chi Chuan for over 30 years. She is a disciple of Grandmaster Eddie Wu Kwong Yu, head of the 5th generation of the Wu family and gatekeeper of the Wu style.

Karen Greenberg is a Success-Tracking Train-the-Trainer and Essence Repatterning Certified Practitioner, having traveled for decades teaching Personal/Spiritual Growth to Metaphysical Spiritual Seekers worldwide, a Registered Physical Therapist, who taught Physical Therapy Students at University of Maryland Hospital, and has taught dance at her studios.

Cindy Guillean has been sharing the magic of writing and self-expression with others for more than 30 years. She is a teacher, learner, seeker, writer, Reiki Master, Cognitive Coach, National Writing Project Fellow and an awakening soul.

Master Zhong Hai (Winnie) is the Chief Nun at Triple Crane Retreat Center in Chelsea MI. In 2004 she received a Class A Yoga Certification for a 21-day program at The Lakulish International Fellowship and Enlightenment Mission (LIFE Mission) in India. Master Hai is a devoted teacher and practitioner who is committed to Triple Crane Retreat Center and to fostering in the community a welcoming atmosphere free of prejudice, open to all local residents, as well as anyone who wishes to pursue Chan, Yoga, and spiritual awareness and awakening.

Craig Harvey created The Peace Generator many moons ago and has been filling the world with peace ever since.

Amy Hertz, a student of Gelek Rimpoche, has been connected to Jewel Heart for more than 30 years and currently serves on its board. In her various positions at HarperCollins, Penguin, and Random House, she has edited and published some of the bestselling Buddhist books for a general audience including the *Tibetan Book of Living and Dying, Art of Happiness, The Universe in a Single Atom, Good Life Good Death,* and several books by Thich Nhat Hanh and Robert Thurman.

Collaborative Therapeutic Massage

By Ginger Chase

Collaborative: Produced or conducted by two or more parties working together.

I view what I do as a collaboration between myself and my client—and sometimes, indirectly, between my client, other practitioners, and me. I expect my clients to work alongside me to ease their muscles, take further steps in their own healing, and work at shifting their posture.

When I started seeing clients on my own in 2018, I sought to come up with a business name that felt right, and to set an intention for my practice. I had previously worked at a local massage business where I began to practice with my clients in the way I wanted and felt was beneficial. Many clients who came to see me were in pain, or had limited range of motion in their joints, or chronic stress. Largely my intention for clients is to relieve their muscle tension in a lasting way. What I enjoyed was feedback from clients that, after the initial pain was lifted, they were able to take other steps toward bettering their health and maintaining the work we did together. When I started seeing my own clients, my intention was to have this type of work as my focus.

> Largely my intention for clients is to relieve their muscle tension in a lasting way.

During client intake, I observe how my client is moving and standing. I look at how their feet are planting and make note of imbalances. A first appointment with me will include a conversation about their pain/tension, a physical assessment, and me getting an understanding of emotional stressors. I ask what they've tried, what's worked, what hasn't. Sometimes they are aware of the origins of their physical pain or limitations (accidents, occupation, hobbies).

If clients have a repetitive job, or activity, I may help problem solve how they can shift the way they perform it, so as to not strain their body. Or I may recommend getting up and stretching regularly for a client who has a majority of work on the computer. I offer stretching suggestions and ask people to consider their working conditions and encourage adjustments. I encourage many of my clients to get further testing or talk with their doctor about concerns outside of my scope—as independent verification. With some, I encourage them to find self-care activities, or to find further support. I feel honored that my clients feel safe enough to open up to me and work hard to hold them in the most compassionate light possible. The foundation of my massage work is Neuromuscular Therapy, Myofascial Release, and some sports massage. Sometimes clients know this kind of work generically as “deep tissue” massage. (Deep tissue is a kind of unspecified term for massage that isn’t simply relaxing, or Swedish, but is deeper, more therapeutic work). For many of my clients we begin by focusing on specific issues and find our way to what I call “therapeutic relaxation massage.” I’m still releasing tight, sore muscles, melting stuck fascia (connective tissue) when I find areas that need it, but the over-all massage is quieter and more peaceful. Fundamentally, I view that together we are working on creating a change (including relaxation) in their bodies. During a session, I encourage clients to use their breath to sync with their minds and bodies. That said, sessions may be challenging. Clients benefit most when they are pushed outside of their comfort zone onto a path toward longer, lasting relief.

> For many of my clients we begin by focusing on specific issues and find our way to what I call “therapeutic relaxation massage.”

Currently my office is in the Harmony in Motion Studio managed by my friend and Feldenkrais® practitioner, Dale Jensen. I often recommend that clients learn to use their bodies more efficiently from him. Once you are in less pain and strain, why not learn to use whole muscle groups to work rather than repeatedly taxing out small muscles for the same job?

I studied and received my massage schooling certificate in 2014 from the now closed, Ann Arbor Institute of Massage Therapy. The emphasis of the school (or what I gleaned from it the most) was an ethic of providing therapeutic massages and having a code of professionalism. The ethos of having empowered clients (and helping to empower) was some of the wisdom imparted by Jocelyn Granger, the director of the school. She encouraged us to teach our clients stretches and exercises, maintain hydration, and do their homework as a part of our practices. She implored us not to be used as a co-dependent fixer, but as an encouraging professional with wisdom, knowledge, and experience. I am very much a product of my education–both formal and informal. I view my clients as collaborators in their own well-being. I'm there to share my observations, ask questions, and encourage my clients to take or to continue to take positive steps toward well-being.

> Clients benefit most when they are pushed outside of their comfort zone onto a path toward longer, lasting relief.

Ginger Chase is certified in Myofascial Release and Neuromuscular Therapy. Her office is practicing Covid safety measures. To learn more about her and schedule an appointment, visit her online at Gingerchasemassages.com. You can also call or text her to schedule at (734) 660-5748.

TEACHERS, LECTURERS, WORKSHOP LEADERS, AND THE CENTERS CONTINUED

Ryan Huang travelled from Toronto to Triple Crane Retreat Center to attend Huayen Chan-Kuan in 2016. During this retreat he took refuge under the guidance of [renowned Chinese Huayen Buddhist scholar and Chan Master] Venerable Haiyun Jimeng (a.k.a Master Sea Cloud).

Roger Jackson is professor emeritus of Asian studies and religion at Carleton College and visiting professor of Buddhism at Maitripa College. His research and writing interests include Indian and Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, meditation, and ritual, Buddhist religious poetry, and modern Buddhist thought. His forthcoming book, *Rebirth: A Guide to Mind, Karma, and Cosmos in the Buddhist World* (Shambhala, 2022), provides the focal point for this Jewel Heart workshop.

Robert Jacobs studied meditation with two Spiritual Masters from India for 18 years, described in his memoir Journey to the Awakened Heart. He is founder of Awakened Heart Yoga and Meditation in Gainesville, FL.

David Jibson is a poet, editor, and blog master.

Virginia June LMSW, CAADC, RT, ADS is a trainer of the NADA auricular acupuncture protocol. This protocol is exceptional for pain management, smoking cessation, depression, anxiety, sleep disorders, sinus issues, and early recovery from substance use disorder.

Heidi Kaminski is a certified teacher and a spiritual student of many years.

Esther Kennedy, OP, a Dominican Sister of Adrian, MI is a retreat leader and spiritual director. She conducts a monthly Day of Mindfulness at the Weber center.

Rev. Annie Kopko is one of the ministers at the Interfaith Center for Spiritual Growth.

Lifespan Doulas offers professional online doula training and certification for the complete lifespan.

Lighthouse Center has been holding meditations, classes on spirituality, and music since 1989.

Michael Limauro has been teaching meditation for 35 years. He is a disciple of Paramhansa Yoganandaji and an Ananda minister, the president of Ananda MI, and provides programs in leadership development, as well as coaching for business owners and executives.

Michigan Collaborative for Mindfulness in Education (MC4ME) is a non-profit dedicated to providing training in mindfulness practice to support the health and well-being of educators, students, mental health professionals, and parents.

> Happiness cannot be traveled to, owned, earned, worn or consumed. Happiness is the spiritual experience of living every minute with love, grace, and gratitude.
>
> -Denis Waitley

Mary Minock's new poetry collection*, A Time When You Know a House,* explores the Southwest Detroit neighborhood where she grew up during the 1950s and 1960s and returned to in 1996. She is the author of *The Way-Back Room* (memoir) and *Love in the Upstairs Flat* (poems), and Professor Emerita and former Chair of English at Madonna University.

Edward Morin, is a poet, translator, and English teacher at universities and colleges.

Glenn Mullin, long-time friend and student of Gelek Rimpoche, studied philosophy, literature, meditation, yoga, and the enlightenment culture under 35 of the greatest living masters of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism. He is the author of over 20 books on Tibetan Buddhism, founder and director of the Mystical Arts of Tibet, curator of a number of important Tibetan art exhibitions, and leads tours to Nepal and Tibet.

Rosina Newton is an organic gardening coach and holistic landscape designer with over 35 years experience in the field. Through New Earth Home and Garden, Rosina provides ecological services to southeast Michigan residents, and shares the joy of nature with audiences everywhere.

John Orr received Theravada Buddhist ordination and training for a period of eight years while living as a monk in the 1970s in Thailand and India. After retiring from the faculty of Duke University, he now lives near Asheville, North Carolina.

Kathy Paholsky has been a massage therapist and educator for over 30 years, stepping away from private practice in April 2020. After teaching entry level students for over 20 years, she became an Approved Provider for the National Certification Board for Massage Therapy, offering CEs to practicing therapists.

Amy Pavlov is a Reiki Master and Massage Therapist. She sees the world as a holistic continuum of the physical and the energetic. She treats clients and teaches her students to honor the whole person in this way.

> You are not **in** the universe, you **are** the universe.
>
> -Eckhart Tolle

The Peaceful Dragon School has offered year-round programs in Tai Chi (Yang Style – Short Form) and Qigong Energy Work Since 1990.

Angelo Pecora and Gus (The Louse Crick Loosely Strung Band) is an authentic cowboy with sidekick Gus and his mule Rosie.

Judy Ramsey was trained as a shamanic practitioner by Sandra Ingerman, Carla Meeske, Kate Durda, Stephanie Tighe and others, and is approved by Sandra Ingerman as an instructor for Journeying, Extraction, Medicine for the Earth, Healing With Spiritual Light, Soul Retrieval, and Death and Dying. Judy has also developed classes in shamanic healing for animals and shamanic animal communication. She provides in person, as well as remote shamanic healing, counseling and communication services.

Gelek Rimpoche (1939–2017) was the Founder and Spiritual Director of Jewel Heart. Among the last generation of incarnate lamas tutored by the great masters in Old Tibet, Rimpoche's command of western culture allowed him to convey the Tibetan Buddhist tradition with wisdom, kindness, and wit.

Demo Rinpoche is Jewel Heart's Resident Spiritual Advisor. He studied uninterrupted for almost thirty years at the Drepung Loseling Monastery in India under the supervision of the Dalai Lama and received the highest monastic degree of Geshe Lharampa in 2011. His studies continued at Gyume Tantric College, Sera College of Higher Tibetan Studies, and Union Theological Seminary.

Libby Robinson, Ph.D., MSW is a Certified Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) teacher, with 40+ years of practicing mindfulness, including over 25 one-week silent retreats. She has taught over 50 classes since 2007 to a wide range of individuals.

David Rosenberg is a certified Iyengar yoga instructor who has been teaching since 1993. He has traveled to Pune, India in 1996 to study from the Iyengars as well as studying from other advanced Iyengar yoga teachers.

Margaret Rozga's fifth book of poems is *Holding My Selves Together: New and Selected Poems* (2021). While Wisconsin Poet Laureate in 2019-2020, she co-edited *Through This Door: Wisconsin in Poems* with Angie Trudell Vasquez. Margaret is currently the inaugural artist/scholar at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee at Waukesha Field Station.

The Rudolf Steiner Health Center is designed to support those with chronic illness or those looking to avoid developing illness when they realize that their health is endangered. Small group setting with a balance of activities throughout the day and evening to teach, experience and inspire patients to feel a new sense of vitality and healing forces. All conditions are welcome and even those who are not yet diagnosed with anything. Physician founders Molly and Quentin McMullen were trained in anthroposophical medicine in Germany and Switzerland.

Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor offers an independent education that is helping students look beyond GPA and imagine, analyze, create, collaborate, and build a better future. Our hands-on PreK-12 curriculum supports students throughout their educational journey.

Hartmut Sagolla has been studying Tibetan Buddhism for over 30 years. He lived at the Tibetan Buddhist Society, Melbourne, Australia, before moving to the U.S. Since 2002, he has served as a Program Director at Jewel Heart. He is a long-time Jewel Heart Instructor and Director of the Bloomfield Hills chapter.

Victoria Schon has travelled extensively to Costa Rica to sit with and learn from indigenous medicine people. She facilitates sacred sound healings and sacred cacao ceremonies. She is a certified holistic health coach, a certified and trained sound healer, and certified detoxification specialist. While in Costa Rica she was introduced to crystal singing bowl sound healings and was instantly transformed by the sound vibrations and experienced a deeper awareness, ease, and an inner bliss.

Janet Somalinog is a Religious Science Practitioner.

John Steinbauer is a Usui Reiki Master and intuitive healer. His meditative concerts/music therapy is performed with Crystal Singing Bowls.

Steiner Health is a 501c3 dedicated to educating patients and practitioners about the benefits of anthroposophical medical insights based on the research of Rudolf Steiner and practical application of that research for the betterment of humanity.

Heather Schram is a licensed Numerologist and Consciousness Creator Coach. She uses the Universal Laws, Numerology, and the Energy Bodies to coach a conscious re-frame around one's experiences.

Teachers, Lecturers, Workshop Leaders, and the Centers Continued

7 NOTES NATURAL HEALTH
HEAR, SEE, AND FEEL TRUE WELLNESS

Rob Meyer-Kukan

Rob Meyer-Kukan began his practice in 2015 as the Healthy Musician Institute, LLC, serving musicians and performing artists with repetitive strain injuries. Now his business is known as 7 Notes Natural Health. At 7 Notes, Meyer-Kukan provides massage and sound therapy, Reiki, reflexology, and more. He is a passionate educator and musician. In addition to this, he is a licensed massage therapist and sound therapist. Meyer-Kukan is currently studying naturopathy with plans to become a Naturopathic Doctor. 7 Notes Natural Health is growing! They are adding an additional space in their current location for group offerings, classes, retreats, and more! Learn more about Meyer-Kukan on his website 7notesnaturalhealth.com.

SANDYA - Sandra Shears is a Spiritual Channel, Healer, and Counselor since 1990 as guided by the Higher Communities of Light. As a Light Worker and Vibrational Practitioner, she specializes in the activation and development of other practitioners, light workers, and world servers.

Colby Cedar Smith has poems published in *Pleiades, Mid-American Review,* and *The Iowa Review.* Her debut novel in verse, *Call Me Athena: Girl from Detroit*, is a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection, an American Booksellers Association Indie Next Pick, and a Cybils Award Nominee. She was awarded a New Jersey Council on the Arts Fellowship in Poetry.

Strawbale Studio is located one hour north of Detroit and offers classes in natural building, bushcraft, and other sustainable activities.

Steven Sy is a Senior Instructor of Master Mantak Chia's system, certified in Qigong Meditation Basics, Tao Yin Qigong, Iron Shirt Qigong 1-2, Tantien Qigong, Tai Chi Qigong 1-3, Fusion of the Five Elements 1, Healing Love, and Inner Alchemy Qigong.

Maria Sylvester is a certified Life Coach and founder of Ann Arbor's Life Empowerment Coaching and Healing Arts Center. She specializes in helping people courageously, confidently, and powerfully transform their lives.

Judy Lee Nur-un-nisa Trautman is a certified leader and mentor in training of the Dances of Universal Peace. Elizabeth Rand is a mentored leader.

Triple Crane Retreat Center's vision is to function as a teaching, practice, and retreat center for Chinese Huayen Mahayana Buddhism and it's dynamic, whole system approach of combining the Classical Hatha Yoga system as taught by Swami Kripalvananda and Chinese Huayen Mahayana Buddhism. Triple Crane Retreat Center is committed to cultivating a supportive community and tranquil environment for personal and group retreats, as well a residential, and local commuter programs where spiritual seekers with a desire for authentic spiritual growth and Ultimate Enlightenment can submerge themselves in consistent and progressive spiritual practice.

Sophia Unfolds has been holding full moon gatherings for eight years.

Susan Van Baalen is an Adrian Dominican Sister. For many years, she worked in an environment that required her to explore the depth and breadth of world religions. In doing so, she recognized the universality of beliefs and the diverse expressions of faith shared by members of the three Abrahamic religions. She holds a doctoral degree from Georgetown University, and theology and ministry pontifical degrees from Loyola University, Jesuit School of Theology in Chicago. She has taught graduate and undergraduate courses in World Religions and lectured internationally.

Verapose Yoga and Meditation House is a center for yoga teacher training, meditation, yoga, sacred sound, workshops, ceremony, and healing arts cooperative in Dexter with the intention of helping others to develop a stronger sense of inner peace and wellbeing.

Joe Walters has practiced Chen style tai chi chuan for 27 years.

Andrea Weid is an occupational therapist, nationally certified health and wellness coach, and a certified mindfulness teacher for A Course in Mindful Living. She absolutely loves working with people on their change-making journey and believes that kindness, self-compassion, and mindfulness are the glue that holds lasting change together.

Conrad Welsing is a Professional Hypnotic Consultant and Educator with Hypnosis in Ann Arbor.

Suzy Wienckowski is a Reiki Master and Massage Therapist. Suzy has over 40 years of experience in the healing arts. Reiki has been the focus of her work since 1993. Her training includes study with two Masters initiated by Hawayo Takata and with Hiroshi Doi, a member of the original Usui Reiki Ryoho Gakkai in Japan. Suzy teaches the traditional Usui System of Reiki Healing and is a member of The Reiki Alliance.

Julie Woodward, MSW, RYT-200, is a coach, experienced psychotherapist, health educator, and yoga teacher. Trained facilitator of The Work That Reconnects, Julie offers coaching and group classes to people who wish to experience embodied practices to support personal growth.

Write On has been helping Michigan writers reach their goals since 2014.

Master Wasentha Young is a Qi-Gong practitioner since 1968. She shares her in-depth knowledge of practices that nurture the human spirit, promote health, and move students into a place of strength, harmony, and well-being.

Celeste Zygmont has been involved with Deep Spring Center for three decades, learning through its programs, talks, and retreats. Her own spiritual growth through meditation and mindfulness has shaped her practice and teaching.

ON JANUARY 1, 2022, THE CRAZY WISDOM COMMUNITY JOURNAL WILL BE AVAILBLE ON OUR WEBSITE: CRAZYWISDOMJOURNAL.COM.

Belong! Explore! Become!

Find Your Way at The Institute!

Inspire a world of health! Your diploma in Massage Therapy, Natural Health, or Holistic Doula is here.

Call Now to Find Out More!

Naturopathy

(each year 600 hours)

Natural Health Educator	1st Year
Natural Health Therapist	2nd Year
Natural Health Practitioner	3rd Year
Certified Naturopath	4th Year

4th Year graduates are eligible for Doctor of Naturopathy National Test & Title

Massage Therapy

Therapeutic Bodywork Practitioner...1 Year

Holistic Doula Practitioner

Certificate Course.......3 Classes
Diploma Course.......7 Months

All Classes Meet on Weekends

Fri: 5-9pm and Sat & Sun: 9am-6pm
Naturopaths: 1 per month - Massage: 2 per month

Individual Classes:

Herbology - Aromatherapy - Nutrition
Live Food Preparation - Light Healing Touch
Reflexology - Homeopathy & Much More

NITE

NATUROPATHIC INSTITUTE
OF THERAPIES & EDUCATION

(989) 773-1714 ~ Mount Pleasant, MI
contact@naturopathicinstitute.org
www.naturopathicinstitute.org

Over 25 Years of Experience ~ Licensed and Accredited

RUDOLF
STEINER
SCHOOL
OF ANN ARBOR

Look A Little Deeper

Breadth • Depth • Success

Helping Develop Young People Who Can Imagine, Analyze, Create and Collaborate. Young People Who Can Change the World.

SteinerSchool.org • Admissions@SteinerSchool.org